(Re)framing the Hortus
an analysis of the boundaries of the Roman garden in the Late Republic and Early Empire

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(Re)Framing the *Hortus*: An Analysis of the Boundaries of the Roman Garden in the Late Republic and Early Empire

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Abstract

Transculturally, the garden is understood as a marked-off, often bounded, and cultivated space. Distinct from other surroundings, gardens are material and symbolic spaces that constitute both universal and culturally specific ways of accommodating the natural world and expressing human attitudes and values. For the ancient Romans of the Late Republic and Early Empire (c.100BC – AD150), the garden was, just as it is today, a recognisable and defined space that provided a setting for, and a backdrop to, a whole range of horticultural, artistic, social, and even political activities and practices. However, despite the two basic requirements of cultivation and enclosure, when we actually analyse individual garden sites, we find that the distinction between 'garden' and 'not-garden' is anything but straightforward. We define the space explicitly through the notion of separation and division, and yet, in many instances, we are unable to make sense of that divide.

In response to this ambiguity, this thesis interrogates the notion of the 'boundary' as an essential characteristic of the Roman garden, and explores the perception of the space in response to its limits. Using case studies from both literature and material and visual culture, my cross-disciplinary study examines the status of different gardens as they relate to, or are framed by, their contexts. These case studies are formulated as three sets of comparative pairs, each representing a different 'type' of garden: Virgil *Georgics* 4.116-148 and Columella Book 10 (agricultural); the *Ara Pacis* and Livia's Garden Room (sacred); and Pliny *Ep.* 2.17/5.6 and Villa A at Oplontis (elite villa). My analysis demonstrates how the Romans of the Late Republic and Early Empire constructed garden boundaries specifically in order to open up or undermine the division between a number of oppositions, such as inside/outside, practical/aesthetic, sacred/profane, art/nature, and real/imagined. This, in turn, highlights how Roman gardens of this period are always attached or supplementary, either conceptually or literally; and how, despite their bounded presentation, they also remain transitional and permeable.

By examining the ambiguities of Roman gardens across a number of different registers, this thesis thus highlights the importance of an interdisciplinary approach to garden space whilst still maintaining nuanced critical analysis of individual garden sites. By following this approach, I demonstrate that what is important is not so much a matter of what all the individual gardens have in common – in that they have some form of boundary – but how we use that particular characteristic as a standpoint from which to analyse them. In this way, it becomes clear that what is significant is not necessarily the boundary itself, but, rather, the delight in playing with concepts of boundedness and separation.

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Unless otherwise stated, all images are authors own.

Introduction

> *The garden experienced by the subject is always a particular garden in a particular place, enclosed by a clear boundary and thereby separated from a qualitatively differentiated outside world, but its situation is nonetheless ambiguous.*[1]

Transculturally, the garden is predominantly understood as a marked-off, often bounded, and cultivated space. Distinct from other surroundings, gardens are 'material and symbolic spaces that constitute both universal and culturally specific ways of accommodating the natural world and expressing human attitudes and values'.[2] The garden can be a physical place, but it also has the potential to transcend that physicality through the actions that take place there and the meanings these actions produce. As a microcosm of the ideal landscape, the garden has the power to transform an objectively defined location into a culturally informed site imbued with specific, yet ultimately subjective, meanings and frames of reference. For the ancient Romans of the Late Republic and Early Empire (c.100BC – AD150), the garden was, just as it is today, a recognisable and defined space that provided a setting for, and a backdrop to, a whole range of horticultural, artistic, social, theological, and even political activities and practices. Indeed, the importance of garden culture in the Roman imagination during this period is reflected in the diversity and volume of evidence available to us on the subject, ranging across the archaeological, art historical, and literary fields.

However, despite the two basic requirements of cultivation and enclosure, the garden, in both the ancient and modern imagination, remains an elusive concept demonstrating 'protean complexity':[3] when a French garden historian, the Comte Ernest de Ganay, concluded that the garden simply 'is what it is' (*un jardin est ce qu'il est*), he was, no doubt, reflecting on the difficulty in determining the essence of a space that can appear and function in an almost infinite amount of ways.[4] Furthermore, when we actually analyse individual garden sites, we find that part of the issue in determining the limits of these sites, both physical and metaphorical, is the slipperiness of the seemingly obvious distinction between 'garden' and 'not-garden'. We may define the space explicitly through the notion of separation or division, and yet, in many instances, we are unable to make sense of that very basic divide.

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[1] Jones (2016): 30.
[2] Coleman (2014): 1.
[3] Von Stackelberg (2009): 6.
[4] As quoted in Hunt (2000): 14.

In response to this ambiguity, this thesis interrogates the notion of the 'boundary' as an essential characteristic of the Roman garden during the Late Republic and Early Empire, and explores the perception of the space in response to its limits. Using case studies from both literature and material and visual culture, I will explore a series of individual garden sites by posing questions such as: what purpose do garden boundaries serve in each example? Why are they constructed in the way they are? How do they affect the relationship between the garden and the not-garden, the garden and the visitor, the garden and the viewer? And how does the notion of a garden boundary translate across real, represented, and textual forms?

My chosen case studies are formulated as three sets of comparative pairs, all 'located' in either the city of Rome or the wider Italian peninsula, and each representing one of three different types of garden – agricultural, sacred, or elite villa. This case study approach dictates the structure of the thesis. I begin, in Part One ('Setting the Framework'), by defining 'the garden' and situating it in relation to our modern understanding of the term, before moving towards an analysis of specifically Roman terminology and its associated meanings (chapter one). This exercise in definition will, in turn, provide me with a platform to set out the theoretical framework for the analysis of my case studies and situate this framework against previous scholarship (chapter two).

Part Two ('Case Study Analysis') begins with chapter three, where I examine the status of the 'original' Roman garden (the *hortus*) through an analysis of two literary treatments of the space – Virgil *Georgics* 4.116-148 and the preface to Columella Book 10. Here, I consider whether the garden's bounded status constitutes an actual separation from the rest of the agricultural world it is situated within; and I explore the ways in which both poets articulate the ambiguous garden-agriculture relationship through the deliberate ways in which they structure and frame their garden texts. Chapter four, meanwhile, focuses on the shared botanical imagery of the *Ara Pacis* and Livia's Garden Room, reframing the *Ara Pacis* as a sacred garden grove purposefully constructed as part of an Augustan green landscape. In particular, my discussion argues that the way in which boundaries are constructed, represented, and contested within these two artistic compositions creates an intersection between garden space and sacred space, an intersection that, in turn, reflects the ideological structures promoted as part of the Augustan regime. Finally, in chapter five, I explore the garden spaces and paintings of Villa A at Oplontis in conjunction with the description of villa gardens in Pliny the Younger's letters 2.17 and 5.6. My analysis here examines the extent to which elite Romans regarded their villa gardens as objects of artificially constructed viewpoints; and I demonstrate how the garden boundary operates as a porous membrane within the villa that mediates between a series of oppositions and multiplies our sense of perspective.

In this way, chapters three, four, and five not only shed new light on familiar objects from the fresh perspective of garden space, but they also expand current scholarship on more traditionally accepted Roman garden spaces through their focus on the idea of boundedness. By exploring the status of these six different gardens as they relate to, or framed by, their individual contexts, my analysis across these three chapters will also demonstrate how the Romans of the Late Republic and Early Empire constructed garden boundaries specifically in order to open up or undermine the division between a number of oppositions, such as inside/outside, practical/aesthetic, sacred/profane, art/nature, and real/imagined. This, in turn, will showcase how Roman gardens of this period are always attached or supplementary, either conceptually or literally; and how, despite their bounded presentation, they also remain transitional and/or permeable.

Furthermore, by examining the ambiguities of Roman garden space across a number of different registers, my study will highlight the importance of an interdisciplinary approach to garden space, whilst still maintaining nuanced critical analysis of individual garden sites. Despite an increase in examinations of Roman gardens, the majority of scholars still tend to study the space solely from within the narrow bounds of separate disciplines (art, archaeology, literature, botanical analysis, etc.); and, even when a more inclusive approach is taken, the cross-media examples are commonly conceptualised naively as evidence whose differences can be elided. Indeed, when attempting to incorporate all the evidence across different types of media under one large umbrella of 'garden space', it is all too tempting to try to unearth the 'true essence' of all the individual garden sites. Logically, we want to find a meeting point between the different types of evidence and question what it is that brings them all together into one category; and the garden boundary does appear, on the surface, to be an essential characteristic that we can attach to all gardens.

What I hope to demonstrate, though, is that what is important is not so much a matter of what all gardens have in common – in that they have some form of boundary – but, rather, how we can use that particular characteristic as a standpoint from which to analyse them; and how what is significant is not necessarily the boundary itself but, rather, the delight in playing with concepts of boundedness and separation. In this way, this thesis makes a significant scholarly contribution to the study of garden space by establishing a series of analytical tools that can be applied to the study of other individual garden sites from other periods and regions.

Part One: Setting the Framework

Chapter One

Defining Garden Space

Let us, then, begin by defining what a garden is, and what it ought to be…[1]

I begin this study by posing a seemingly straightforward question: what is a garden? Since gardens and the act of gardening are a feature of practically every human culture, our familiarity with 'the garden' as a concept suggests that we can easily recognise them as entities. However, *recognising* gardens and actually *defining* them are two very different things; and the more we try to seek a definition for this type of space, the more our implicit knowledge of them becomes a hindrance to providing any sort of definitive set of necessary and sufficient conditions for all their potential features, appearances, and purposes. Providing a definition, though, is still a worthwhile exercise — as John Dixon Hunt has argued, if a subject is to be fully and usefully considered, it is useful to know its parameters and essential constituents.[2]

In this chapter, then, I seek to establish a definition of the garden that, first, captures reasonably well the everyday understanding of the term; second, allows enough specificity to determine key characteristics; but also, third, allows enough flexibility to account for the variety of forms and functions that the garden space can take. My discussion will begin by defining 'the garden' and situating it in relation to our modern understanding of the term, before moving towards an analysis of specifically Roman terminology and its associated meanings. This exercise in definition will, in turn, provide me with a platform for chapter two, where I set out the theoretical framework for the analysis of my case studies and situate this framework against previous scholarship.

The Garden as a Bounded Space

When scholars have attempted definitions of 'the garden' in the past, they continually assign two core principles to the space, albeit to various degrees – boundedness and cultivation. Mara Miller, for example, hints at these principles when she states that a garden is

[1] Repton (1816): 141-2.
[2] Hunt (2000): 14. Ross (2007) 256, however, suggests that it is still too tempting to think all gardens have some traits in common, despite the fact that it is no longer fashionable to seek strict ontological definitions in terms of necessary and sufficient conditions. For a more philosophical approach to the question 'what is a garden', see Cooper (2006), 12-21, esp. 15, where the author argues that the question need not be a request for definition, but, instead, a request to address various issues of an ontological kind; for example, 'what kind of being does a garden have? What sort of entity or object is a garden? When, and as a result of what sort of degrees of change does a garden cease to be?'

a 'purposeful arrangement of natural objects'.[3] Victoria Pagán, meanwhile, lays them out explicitly:[4]

> *A garden is a **three-dimensional space within a clearly defined boundary**, whose foundation is soil, in which plants are **deliberately cultivated** for the purpose of providing food or aesthetic pleasure.*

Despite the many possible manifestations of what can constitute a garden, it seems that the majority of scholars always return to these same fundamental characteristics, defining the garden as a space segregated from its surroundings and one that is developed into something different from those surroundings through a process of cultivation.

The particular emphasis on boundedness is, in fact, so dominant that it is even reflected in the etymological origins of the word 'garden'. The Old Persian *pairidaeza*, for example, formed of *pairi* (around) and *daeza* (fence), was the basis for the Hellenized *paradeisos* (a reserve containing wild animals to hunt and a garden for produce);[5] which, in turn, became 'paradise', a term deeply embedded in the Christian understanding of the Garden of Eden.[6] Similarly, other European and proto-European words for 'garden' all appear to share the same root association with a enclosure: Old English *geard* (fence) developed into the modern English 'yard'; Indo-European *gher* (fence) and *ghort* (enclosure) are parents to the Greek *chortos* (an enclosed space used for growing food) and its Latin derivation *hortus* (garden);[7] and the modern Italian (*giardino*), Spanish (*jardin*), and French (*jardin*) terms for garden are all derived from the Vulgar Latin *gardinum* (enclosure). This shared etymological concern with boundaries and enclosure led Van Erp-Houtepen, in her investigation of the European terminology for gardens, to conclude that 'put simply, the fence or wall is a basic

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[3] Miller (1993): 15.

[4] Pagán (2006): 8. In contrast, note the vagueness of Elkins (1993), 189, who simply states that the garden is 'between nature and culture' – although perhaps useful as a reflexive description, this is not a good 'starting point' definition.

[5] On the *pairidaeza*, see Moynihan (1979). On the *paradeisos*, see Farrar (1998), 9-10. The Greek writer Xenophon (*Oec.* 4.21) appears responsible for the Hellenized form of *paradeisos*, when he uses it to indicate the garden of King Cyrus that he admired during his travels in Persia. Ziegler (1989), *sv. 'paradeisos'*, deals mainly with the biblical use of the term, although they do consider the attitudes of the Greeks towards these types of garden-parks (also identified with *kēpoi* and *alsoi*). Tuplin (1996) argues that the term is too broad in meaning for definitive conclusions regarding the size, contents, and location from the word alone.

[6] Lane Fox (2014), 296-7, notes the distinction between Christian 'paradise' and the loose use of the term in non-Christian images, which he argues should be called simple 'scenes of abundance'.

[7] See Ernout and Meillet (1959), *sv. 'hortus'*. The Latin noun *cohors*, closely related to *hortus*, can also mean 'enclosure'. Cf. Von Stackelberg (2009), 9-21 who charts the concepts and terms related to the garden in the Roman imagination and, in particular, the similarities and differences between the Latin *hortus* and the Greek *chortos*: in the Greek, the term seems primarily utilised in relation to animals (in Hom. *Il.* 11.774 and 24.640, it is used to designate the area of the courtyard where the cattle were kept), with the produce from the space mostly used for livestock; whereas the *hortus* seems more intimately connected with domestic space and human food production. Both terms, however, maintain the notion of enclosure.

and characteristic feature' of the garden space, and that 'a garden without a fence is, in fact, no longer a proper garden'.

Although, in the course of my case study analysis, I will be demonstrating that the notion of a garden boundary does not have to entail the obvious physicality of a fence, it would be amiss, based on the aforementioned evidence, to suggest that boundaries were not an intrinsic element of the conception of garden space. The notion of a boundary does not just have to encompass spatial control, but it can also be a way of concretely articulating the more complex conceptual separation of the garden from its surroundings. The garden, as we shall see, is different to other elements of the natural world, and what distinguishes these chunks of land from the rest of the world is not just a physical boundary, but, also, the way in which we understand, connect to, and interact with them.

Returning to Miller's and Pagán's definitions, then, to create a garden is not just to set a space apart from its context, but also to cultivate that separated space to the point that it represents something 'different' compared to that surrounding context. The 'purposeful arrangement' or 'deliberate cultivation' involved in creating a garden is representative of the gardener's ultimate aim of controlling nature enough in order to satisfy his needs, whether that be the physical need for food, the aesthetic need for pleasure, or the kinaesthetic need to move in, out, or through space. This level of control represents something distinctive ideologically compared to, say, a piece of farmland (which is also an enclosed 'natural' space), or an aesthetically pleasing, yet wild and un-tame forest.[8]

It is the combination of many different practical and aesthetic concerns within a garden that creates its unique conceptual identity, an identity that is physically reflected by the separation and control of the space by its boundary. This unique identity enables a variety of activities, which, in turn, endow the garden with a whole range of mythological, religious, socio-economic, and even intellectual meanings.[9] Therefore, although this is perhaps only hinted at by a simple definition, it is important to remember that the garden is much more than a physical entity. To define it purely in spatial or physical terms would be to simplify its significance and limit its potential manifestations. The garden is practical and ideological, physical and metaphysical, 'at once part of the real world – actual pieces of lands – and also virtual worlds – coherent sets of possible sensory stimuli'.[10]

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[8] It is noteworthy that one of the common Japanese terms for garden (*teien*) derives from a combination of two terms meaning 'wilderness' and 'control'.
[9] Pagán (2006): 1.
[10] Ross (1998): 176.

A Microcosm of the Ideal Landscape

As such, gardens operate within the broader remit of 'landscape'. According to Spencer, landscapes are spaces demarcated by walls or boundaries, and, therefore, semiotically framed; they affect those who visit or inhabit them in ways more or less determined by culture and design; and they do not suggest raw or unmediated space, but rather, a collaboration between nature, humankind, and the inhabited world.[11] There are several elements of this reading of landscape that are worth unpacking here in relation to our definition of garden space. First, Spencer makes clear that 'landscape' is set aside, both physically and conceptually, from its surroundings, and it is therefore marked out as different in some way.[12] In this way, by designating an area as a landscape, we transform raw 'space' into a specific 'place', asserting discursive control so that 'what was previously unmarked and unseparated is now a site quilted into a fabric of meaning'.[13]

However, as Spencer's definition of landscape highlights, this fabric of meaning, this set of values that marks the landscape out as different, is not necessarily fixed, but, rather, determined culturally – so, although a place may be marked out physically in an objectively fixed way, that does not mean that every individual person interprets it subjectively in the same way.[14] By foregrounding cultural context and pointing to the subjectivity of the individual's experience within any given fixed 'place', Spencer's notion of landscape aligns with other sophisticated approaches to space, many of which have arisen in response to the seminal work of Lefebvre on *The Production of Space*.[15] In light of this work and other

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[11] Spencer (2010): 5.

[12] McIntyre (2008), 3, similarly defines landscapes as spaces 'shaped by the imposition of boundaries and frames'; and, according to Benjamin (1985), 78, this means that we tend to 'read' landscapes 'inwards' from the perspective of their edges.

[13] I borrow this phrasing from Larmour and Spencer (2007), 11, and their discussion of landscape. Cf. Augé (1995), 42-4, who sees landscapes as a series of places, or 'ethnoscapes', given shared meaning as a territory by a community and providing a shared frame of reference or point of origin for that community.

Postcolonial criticism makes a fundamental distinction between 'space' and 'place', with the former defined as a more abstract concept that can refer to an area, a distance, or even a temporal event, and the latter as a more tangible entity, often linked to a specific location. In contemplating the difference between the two terms, scholars regularly still turn to the distinction set out by Michel de Certeau (1984), who argues that space is 'practiced place'.

[14] Cf. Tuan (1979), 90, who argues that landscape is a combination of objective and subjective understandings of space; and Bender (2006), 303, who notes that 'the same place at the same moment will be experienced differently by different people, will be experienced differently by the same person' and, even, that 'the same person may, at any given moment, hold conflicting feelings about the place'.

[15] Lefebvre (1974). Here, the author distinguishes three types of space: 1) the *espace perçu*, empirical and materialised socially produced space, comprising of the spatial practices created through human activity and experience; 2) the *espace conçu*, conceptualised space formed in the mind, where 'individuals identify what is lived and what is perceived with what is conceived'; and 3) the *espace vécu*, space 'as directly lived through its associated images and symbols', and also the space which the imagination seeks to change or appropriate. The *espace vécu* is the result of, or the 'working out' of the

subsequent scholarship, space is now understood to play an active role in the constitution and reproduction of social identities, and social identities and relations are recognised as producing material and symbolic or metaphorical spaces — space and society do not merely interact with or reflect one another, but, rather, are mutually constituted.[16] For Lefebvre, space is a product of social relations, and precisely because it is a product of *active* practices, it should no longer be conceived as a static geographical entity; and it thus follows that landscape, as a subjective cultural product intrinsically linked to time and memory, can similarly provide a medium for the analysis of social identities.[17] Landscapes, then, although objectively marked out as individual places, still operate at the level of space in that they 'reflect and articulate practices of social behaviour', producing meanings that are 'dynamic and multiple thanks to the unpredictable ways in which they interact with their users over time'.[18]

It is in this context that garden space, as a form of landscape, has come to be understood as a powerful setting in which societies embed beliefs, myths, and fictions.[19] A garden may well be a physical place, but it also has the power to transcend its physicality through the actions that take place there and the meanings those actions produce. Understanding landscapes requires understanding 'forms of actions out of which they arise, to which they give expression, and to which they contribute';[20] and so, as Francis and Hester have argued, we cannot examine a garden as a physical place without probing the ideas that are generated within it and understanding the actions that created those ideas – the 'power of the garden' lies in its 'simultaneous existence as an idea, a place, and an action'.[21]

What is in general true about landscapes, then, is equally true of gardens – both are set aside as different, whether that be physically or conceptually, and both transform objectively defined locations into culturally-informed sites imbued with specific, but ultimately subjective, meanings and frames of reference. Gardens, however, more than any other landscape, appear to be especially associated with a sense of physical boundedness, to the point where the very roots of the word 'garden' are bound to notions of enclosure; and it is

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other two spaces – it 'overlays physical space, making symbolic use of its objects' – and this space is both how the world is (objective) and also how we imagine it to be (conceived).

[16] Valentine (2001): 5-6.

[17] Cf. Spirn's (1998) work on the concept of 'cultural landscapes' – sites that develop and change though consistent human utilisation and interaction, 'crafted to express ideas and evoke feelings'.

[18] Scott (2013): 1.

[19] Hunt (1992): 6.

[20] Cosgrove and Daniels (1988): 14.

[21] Francis and Hester (1990): 8.

this pointed association with the boundary that has led scholars to perceive the garden as a 'microcosm of the ideal landscape as it is understood by the culture that creates it'.[22]

However, thinking about the garden as a landscape and establishing just how it is marked out as 'different' also forces us to interrogate the relationship between the garden space and its surroundings more closely, and to question how the notion of 'enclosure' can be understood as part of this relationship. One section of a Sumerian hymn (the *Lugale*), perhaps the oldest literary evidence of spatial segregation within the landscape, is an excellent demonstration of these issues.[23] In one episode of the *Lugale*, which recounts the deeds of the hero Ninurta, the fresh water of the earth, instead of flowing into the Tigris and watering the fields, flows uselessly into the *kur* ('wilderness').[24] Ninurta's dealings with the *kur* signify a transition from wilderness to civilisation: he enters the *kur*, defeats the enemy Asag, and piles stones of the *kur* into mountains that enclose Sumer and create a dam that returns the waters to the Tigris. Ninurta's blessing upon the new artificial landscape is significant:[25]

> *Its valleys shall be verdant with vegetation for you,*
> *Its slopes shall produce wine and honey for you,*
> *Shall produce for you cedar, cypress, zabulum trees, and boxwood on its terraces,*
> *Shall be adorned with fruit for you* ***like a garden ('kiri').***

The root of this Sumerian story is that, from its origin as a wild and inimical space, the *kur* is transformed into a 'garden' (*kiri*) through an act of separation, which, in turn, leads to a protected safe space for cultivation and habitation.[26] The crucial point here is that, although the garden is 'other', it has been formed from the *kur* – it is both different to the *kur* but also related to it, made from it but no longer fully integrated within it, familiar and yet also alien. In creating his garden, Ninurta founds a proto-Eden for his people 'defined by its fundamental opposition to what was there before', and, yet, what remains is a 'dynamic tension between the past and the present', between the *kur* and the *kiri*.[27]

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[22] Berleant and Carlson (2007): 25.
[23] This passage was bought to my attention by Von Stackelberg (2013), 120-1. For the original Sumerian text of the *Lugale*, see Black et. al. (1988-2006).
[24] For definitions from the Sumerian language, see Halloran (2006).
[25] The quoted lines can be found in 'The Exploits of Ninurta', 1.6.2; cf. n. 23, above.
[26] The Sumerian *kiri* is formed of the noun *ki* ('place) and the verb *ru* ('to send forth shoots, buds, blossoms), and this is probably the root of the Assyrian *kirû* ('garden, grove, or tree plantation') and *kirimãhu* ('pleasure garden'). Phonetic closeness and semantic associations also suggest a relationship between *kirû* and the Hebrew *kar* ('pasture, enclosed pasture'), *karmel* ('plantation'), and *kirem* ('vineyard'), all of which are derived from the verb 'to dig'. For *kirû* and *kirimãhu*, see Wiseman (1983); and for *kar, karmel*, and *kirem*, see Brown, Driver, and Briggs (1996).
[27] Von Stackelberg (2013): 134.

Up to this point, then, we have defined the garden transculturally as a marked-off space – distinct from their surroundings, gardens have been understood as material and symbolic landscapes that constitute both universal and culturally specific ways of accommodating and cultivating the natural world, and expressing human attitudes and values.[28] However, despite the straightforward and basic requirements of cultivation and enclosure, the garden remains an elusive concept demonstrating 'protean complexity'.[29] As demonstrated in the Sumerian hymn, part of the issue in determining what exactly constitutes the garden space is the slipperiness of the seemingly plausible distinction between 'garden' and 'not garden'. We define the space explicitly through the notion of separation and division, but if we cannot actually make sense of the most basic divide, what use is it to characterise gardens by that notion? It is with this question in mind that I will now turn to a more specifically Roman understanding of the garden space.

Gardens in the Roman Imagination

When Pliny the Elder, writing in the later half of the first century AD, introduces his discussion of gardens, he claims that the subject is worth treating because of the intrinsic value of horticulture and because antiquity had admired and recorded famous gardens.[30] The diversity and volume of evidence for gardens in the Late Republic and Early Empire, ranging across the archaeological, art historical, and literary registers, certainly seems to reflect Pliny's suggestion that garden culture held a particularly special place in the Roman imagination.

As already discussed, the basic Latin term for the garden – *hortus* – continues the etymological pattern of garden terminology as emphasising enclosure; and the importance of delineating the garden in the Roman imagination is also reflected by the fact that garden boundaries were deemed worthy enough of protection by the god Priapus, who, as a rustic 'scarecrow' figure, defended the garden from would-be thieves and potential transgressors.[31]

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[28] Coleman (2014): 1.
[29] Von Stackelberg (2009): 6.
[30] Plin. *Nat.* 19.49, transl. Rackham (1950): *Ab his superest reverti ad hortorum curam et suapte natura memorandam et quoniam antiquitas nihil prius mirata est, quam Hesperidum hortos ac regum Adonidis et Alcinoi itemque pensiles…*/ It remains to return from these plants to the cultivation of gardens, a subject recommended to our notice both by its own intrinsic nature and by the fact that antiquity gave its highest admiration to the garden of the Hesperides, and of the Kings Adonis and Alcinous, and also to the Hanging Gardens…
[31] On the figure of Priapus, see Herter (1932) and O'Connor (1989). Originating from Lampsacus, Priapus was a mytho-political figure for the Ptolemies, before finding his function as a garden scarecrow and god of fertility in the Hellenistic period (see Pausanius 9.31.2). This function and status made Priapus very much at home in a pastoral setting, and Uden (2010) charts the god's initial appearances as a literary character in the works of Theocritus and Leonidas of Tarentum.

The god's presence in the garden is both a productive and a prohibitive symbol. His often-exposed phallus acts as both a crude warning against potential perpetrators and a reminder of his status as a god of fertility. The phallus, as an apotropaic symbol, signified the protection of one's space and one's self; and, of all the deities that embodied this symbol, Priapus was chief among the Romans, as Columella demonstrates:[32]

> *sed truncum forte dolatum*
> *arboris antiquae numen venerare Priapi*
> *terribilis membri, medio qui semper in horto*
> *inguinibus puero, praedoni falce minetur.*
>
> [seek]…the rough-hewn trunk
> of some old tree god which you may venerate
> as the god Priapus in your garden's midst,
> who with his mighty member scares the boys
> and with his reaping-hook the plunderer.

The image of Priapic statues put forward here is reflected in the use of real statues and paintings in Pompeii.[33] In the House of the Vettii, for example, a painting of Priapus weighing his enormous phallus against a sack of coins initiates what Clarke has termed a 'Priapus axis' within the house, which culminates in a statue of the deity in the garden who spurts water from his phallus into a fountain basin.[34] This fountain statue is positioned on the same sight line as the entrance painting, with the visual axis moving through the *atrium* and to the left of the fountain Priapus; and, by monitoring both the doorway threshold and the garden, Priapus' phallus is used at the all-important passageway into the house in order to ward off the Evil Eye.[35] Thus, as the Priapic imagery and etymology of the word *hortus* suggests, it appears that the Romans associated the garden space with a sense of enclosure similar to that of our modern understanding.

It is important to make clear, though, that, as is the case in many cultures, there is no singular form of 'Roman garden'. We may use the term *hortus* as an equivalent to 'garden', but this was only one of many different terms used in the Latin language to denote a wide

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[32] Col. 10.30-4, transl. Forster and Heffner (1955). In a similarly crude fashion, the statue of Priapus features in Hor. *Sat.* 1.8, set in the newly converted Gardens of Maecenas. Here, the god (as a statue) is tasked with warning off thieves, but, when faced with the witches Canidia and Sagana, he only manages to scare them off by farting loudly. For an examination of this poem within the context of the gardens found in Latin literature, see esp. Pagán (2006), 37-64; and Uden (2010).
[33] On Priapus in art, see Stewart (1997); and Clarke (1998), esp. 48-9, 174-77, 187-94.
[34] Clarke (1998): 174-77. The painting is located in the House of the Vettii (VI.xv.1), *fauces* b.
[35] Cf. *Carmina Priapea* 10, where the statue of Priapus, as the voice of the epigram, notes how 'amusing' the 'column' standing from his groin must be to his viewers (*nimirum tibi salsa res videtur/ adstans inguinibus columna nostris*).

variety of spaces, all of which fall under our modern broad umbrella category of 'Roman gardens'. Indeed, Farrar has likened the study of Roman gardens to a giant jigsaw puzzle, with little pieces gathered from far and wide to bring the whole picture of Roman garden space together.[36] In this section, then, I will focus on the sub-categorisations within 'Roman gardens', and highlight how, across the board, each category shows a basic adherence to the notion of a garden as a marked-off or bounded space. There are many different ways I could choose to sub-categorise Roman gardens (design, location, function, ideological significance, etc.), but I have chosen to be guided by the terminology used for various garden spaces and their semantic associations.[37] My discussion of these terms will reveal the three broader groups of garden types that informed my choice of case studies – utilitarian/agricultural, ornamental (both 'public' and 'domestic'), and sacred or religious – but it will also point to the fluidity of these terms and groups, a fluidity that will be important to keep in mind as we approach the case study analysis.

The Terminology of Roman Gardens

In scholarship on Roman gardens, there is often a somewhat crude division between the 'practical' and 'aesthetic' garden forms, created by the difference in interpretation between the singular *hortus* and the plural *horti*. The singular form tends to refer to the 'traditional' vegetable or kitchen garden, and it is this garden type that forms the basis of my discussion in chapter three. Originally located at the back at the house, between the main structure and the uncultivated surroundings, the *hortus* was governed primarily by practical needs and the requirement of *labor*.[38] Ideally, as Pliny the Elder describes, maintaining this type of garden was a job for the women of the household, who were responsible for cultivating enough produce and flowers for the house to be self-sufficient:[39]

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[36] Farrar (1998): xi.

[37] In this way, I follow the approach of Von Stackelberg (2009), who also focuses on terminology (cf. n.7, above). In contrast, Gleason (2013) discusses the range of garden types through a series of dichotomies – pleasure vs. utility, public vs. private, formal vs. informal. Nielsen (2013), meanwhile, distinguishes between three types of garden: 1) large park-like gardens; 2) a garden area attached to a structure and more intensively planted than type 1; and 3) a garden found within an architectural structure, typically a courtyard, and often surrounding columns. Within each of these three types, ownership is then used as a point of departure for her discussion.

[38] For *hortus* as a vegetable or kitchen garden, see e.g. Cato *Agr.* 1.7; Var. *R.* 1.16.3; Cic. *Fam.* 16.18.1; Virg. *G.* 4.109, 4.118; Hor. *Carm.* 4.11.2; Prop. 4.2.42; Liv. 1.54.6; Ov. *Met.* 14.624; Tac. *Ger*. 26.2.

[39] Plin. *Nat.* 19.57, transl. Rackham (1950), with minor adaptations. Cf. Lawson (1950), 98-101, who documents the gradual evolution of the *hortus* to include the cultivation of flowers – originally, flowers were only required or desired for religious purposes on festival days but, from the first century BC, they became appreciated for their beauty.

> *...hinc primum agricolas aestumabant prisci, et sic statim faciebant iudicium, necquam esse in domo matrem familias – etenim haec cura feminae dicebatur – ubi indeligens esset hortus, quippe e carnario aut macello vivendum esse.*
>
> …people in the old days used to estimate farmers by their garden produce, and thus at once gave a verdict that there was a bad mistress in the house when the garden outside (which used to be called the woman's responsibility) was neglected, as it meant having to rely on the butcher or the market.

To add to this utilitarian and productive perception of the *hortus*, Cato names this type of garden as one of the subdivisions of the larger rustic farm:[40]

> *Praedium quod primum siet, si me rogabis, sic dicam: de omnibus agris optimoque loco iugera agri centum, vinea est prima, si vino bono et multo est, secundo loco hortus inriguus, tertio salictum, quarto oletum, quinto pratum, sexto campus frumentarius, septimo silva caedua, octavo arbustum, nono glandaria silva.*
>
> If you ask me what is the best kind of farm, I should say: a hundred iugera of land, comprising all sorts of soil, and in a good situation: a vineyard comes first if it produces bountifully wine of a good quality; second, a watered garden; third, an osier bed; fourth, an oliveyard; fifth, a meadow; sixth, grain land; seventh, a wood lot; eight, an arbustum; ninth a vast grove.

Within this agricultural setting, Columella, writing in the first century AD, emphasises the need to set up functional physical barriers around such garden spaces in order to control the access of both animals and humans. For example, he states that 'before you set the bounds [for a garden]…[you should] surround the bounds with a wall or a fence or a ditch' to 'deny a passage not only to cattle but to man'.[41] Later on, he reiterates that, once a site has been determined for a garden, it should be 'enclosed by walls or rough hedges';[42] and he also sets out a method for 'wall[ing] off a garden, from trespass by people or livestock, without major input'.

This particular manifestation of the garden, as a paradigm of ancient rusticity, should be understood in conjunction with the 'myth of the peasant patriarch' in Roman thought, and,

[40] Cato *Agr.* 1.7, transl. Hooper and Ash (1934); cf. Var. *R.* 1.7.10.
[41] Col. 5.10.1: *Modum pomarii, priusquam semina seras, circumvenire maceriis vel saepe vel fossa praecipio nec solum pecori sed et homini transitum negare*.
[42] Col. 10.27-8: *Talis humus vel parietibus vel saepibus hirtis claudatur.* Despite Democritus' warning that putting up walls around a garden was 'shortsighted' and 'over the top' (see Col. 11.3.2), writers as late as the fifth century AD continued to emphasise the garden's enclosure – see Palladius, *Op. agric.* 1.34.4.

therefore, can be seen as a reflection of their deep-seated belief in the archaic agricultural origins of the national and civic identity.[43] These rustic origins are also reflected in the term *heredium*, a space which Von Stackelberg calls 'the original Roman garden space'.[44] The *heredium* signified two acres of land (*bina iugera*) that traditionally corresponded to the original land grants assigned to the Roman citizens by Romulus himself;[45] and, since it could not be bequeathed outside of the family, it was viewed as a symbol of the continuity of archaic agricultural land between generations. However, although Von Stackelberg rather neatly suggests that we can view the *heredium* as a sort of precursor to the *hortus* proper, an extract from Pliny the Elder complicates our picture of the *heredium-hortus* relationship. In the *Natural History*, he states that:[46]

> *in XII tabulis legum nostrarum nusquam nominatur* ***villa****, semper in significatione ea* ***hortus****, in* ***horti*** *vero* ***heredium****.*
>
> In our laws of the Twelve Tables, the word farm (*villa*) never occurs - the word garden (*hortus*) is always used in that sense, while a garden (*horti*) is denoted by family estate (*heredium*).

The only aspect of this passage that is really clear is that the *hortus* and the *heredium* pre-date the *villa* as concepts, but does *villa* simply replace *hortus*? Should we actually see the *hortus* as part of the *heredium*? Or are *hortus* and *heredium* simply interchangeable terms? Furthermore, although Cato may have described the *hortus* as part of a productive farm, in some legal texts the *hortus* is declared as part of the estate, whereas, in others, it is considered its own discrete space.[47] This flexibility in terminology, then, and the ensuing lack of definitive labelling for the most 'traditional' of Roman gardens, is an important factor to keep in mind as we consider other, and later, manifestations of the garden spaces.

The first significant development away from the *hortus* began in the first century BC, when traditional rustic ideals started to be challenged by elite Romans who began to establish ornamental gardens on the fringes of the city and beyond.[48] Of course, the *hortus* did not

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[43] Myers (2018): 261.
[44] Von Stackelberg (2009): 10.
[45] See Var. *R.* 1.10.2.
[46] Plin. *Nat.* 19.50, transl. Rackham (1950); cf. Beard (1998), 28-9, on this passage. The Twelve Tables were published in the fifth century BC, and represented the codification into law of established customs. For an overview of their creation and function, see Cornell (1995), 272-92.
[47] Cato uses both *ager* and *villa* to denote the farm area; cf. Farrar (1998), 12, who calls these rural estates *villa rusticae*. On the *hortus* as part of the *villa*, see *Dig.* 7.8.12.1; and on the *hortus* as its own space, see *Dig.* 47.10.53 and 49.4.1.9. Littlewood (1987) argues that the house, garden, agricultural land, the villa, and the surrounding countryside were not regarded as discrete units but as an 'aesthetically integral entity'.
[48] Purcell (2007), 31, however, warns us that it is all too easy to accept a 'myth of a greenbelt' around Rome, when the idea that the city was simply surrounded by a periphery of gardens is 'thoroughly

simply cease to exist, as is demonstrated by later writers such as Columella (writing during the reign of Nero), but we can certainly notice a gradual change of focus over time from production to pleasure, and this change was accompanied by a lexical shift from the singular *hortus* to the plural *horti*.[49] Pliny the Elder credits the Greek philosopher Epicurus as 'inventing' the concept of *horti*, particularly emphasising the inclusion of these green spaces within an *urban*, as opposed to the more traditionally agricultural, landscape:[50]

> *iam quidem hortorum nomine in ipsa urbe delicias agros villasque possident. Primus hoc instituit Athenis Epicurus otii magister; usque ad eum moris non fuerat in oppidis habitari rura.*
>
> Nowadays, under the name of gardens, people possess the luxury of farms and country houses actually within the city. This practice was first introduced at Athens by Epicurus, that master of leisure; before this, the custom had not existed to have county dwellings in towns.

The earliest well-known *horti* in Rome belonged to some of the key political figures of the Late Republic.[51] Unfortunately, no physical evidence survives of these gardens, but we know about them from inscriptions and texts; and the references to these spaces align with many of the political rivalries and activities of this period:[52] Pompey, for example, used his gardens on the Campus Martius to hand out lavish donations to Rome's votes as bribery;[53] the Gardens of Lucullus are historically viewed negatively as a symbol of the owner's apolitical withdrawal into frivolity and excess;[54] and Caesar's gardens are known predominantly

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misleading'. On the 'loss' of the traditional *hortus*, compare Pliny (*Nat.* 19.51-2), who recalls that all citizens had their own gardens in the early days of Rome, with Juvenal's third *Satire* (3.223-31), where the speaker Umbricius states one of his reasons for leaving Rome is to be able to have a small *hortus*.

[49] For *horti* as pleasure grounds or gardens, see e.g. Var. *R.* 2.11.12; Cic. *Dom.* 112, *Att.* 4.13; Hor. *S.* 1.9.18; Ov. *Tr.* 1.11.37; Mart. 11.34.3; Tac. *Ann.* 16.27; Juv. 10.16. Bannon (2009), 9-10, reminds us that *horti* were not exclusively urban or rural, for pleasure or for profit. On the ownership of this type of garden, see Beard (1998), 25, who notes that the names of recorded owners of *horti* still preserved present an extremely diverse list, spanning the imperial family, the traditional and less traditional aristocracy, imperial hangers on, and even imperial freedman.

[50] Plin. *Nat.* 19.50-1, transl. Rackham (1950), with minor adaptations. Note the novelty of this concept to Rome specifically.

[51] Littlewood (1987), 9-10, argues that there is no conclusive evidence for pleasure gardens in Roman culture earlier than those of Scipio the Younger (Cic. *Amic.* 7.25; *Rep.* 1.9.14); and that the creation of a garden as an aesthetic adjunct of the country estate can be similarly placed soon after the middle of the second century BC, with the retirement of the Elder Scipio to his Liternum estate in 184BC (Livy 38.52.1, 53.8; cf. Sen. *Ep.* 86) seemingly setting the trend for a conversion of the *villa rustica* into what Vitruvius later terms the *villa pseudourbana* (*de Arch.* 6.5.3).

[52] Although scholars initially categorised these early *horti* as symbols of political *withdrawal* (see Boatwright (1998), 72-4), more recently they have come to be understood as symbols of political *maneuvering* (see Von Stackelberg (2009), 74-80, and Macaulay-Lewis (2013), 102).

[53] Plut. *Pomp.* 44.3.

[54] Plut. *Luc.* 1-3, 38.4. Lucullus' gardens were actually created two years prior to his withdrawal from politics in 58bc, and therefore cannot be viewed strictly as a retreat.

through his final political acts, in which he left the space in his will to the Roman people, cementing his popularity with the plebs.[55] During the period of the Late Republic and the advent of the Principate, such luxurious *horti* became more widespread, and the garden space became increasingly associated with leisure or *otium*, as opposed to the simplicity and self-sufficiency of the *hortus*.[56] Commentators, both ancient and modern, have often viewed this reported shift in taste towards pleasure and aesthetic beauty as a reflection of Roman moralising discourse, where the growth of Rome's territory is blamed for the decline in simple virtues in favour of a system of personal wealth and a desire for luxury; and, coincidence or not, the temporal alignment of the increase in *horti* and the gradual collapse of the Republic certainly makes this association appealing.[57]

Myers, for example, has documented the range of associations between the new ornamental gardens and morally unacceptable luxury and excess:[58] in the moralistic writings of authors such as Horace, both Senecas, and Pliny the Elder, garden features were frequently condemned as a luxurious and unnatural perversion of nature;[59] in Tacitus' accounts of Messalina and Agrippina in the *Annals*, he represents gardens as places of perverse power plays;[60] and, finally, building on the associations between gardens and Late Republican leaders, gardens are also frequently used in invective against Roman emperors as a sign of luxury and perverse behaviour.[61] Such passages have led to an echoing of the Roman sentiment in modern scholarship. Lawson, for example, states that 'the vitalizing energy of the Republic found an outlet in the productive vegetable plot [whilst] the elaborate but sterile gardens of the Empire were symbolic of incipient decay';[62] and, similarly, Pagán argues that 'the difference between *hortus* and *horti* can also be measured in terms of fertility and

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[55] Hor. *S.* 1.9.18. Cf. D'Arms (1998), 33-44.
[56] On the significant increase of *horti* and the abandonment of the traditional *hortus* in Late Republican Rome, Boatwright (1998), 72-3, notes some contributing factors: the urban space of the city had become increasingly crowded, leaving little room for individual gardens among the dwellings; and, from the second century BC, there was a marked Hellenization of the elite, with Rome's rich and powerful increasingly appropriating Greek cultural icons and trappings (such as pleasure parks).
[57] Purcell (2007), 302, notes how *horti* are 'apt to be misappropriated by scholarly investigators' as just another set of topoi in the repertoire of Roman luxury'. Interestingly, in an earlier discussion, Purcell (1987b), 203, states that *horti* 'are not really gardens' at all, but, rather, 'select *suburbana*'.
[58] Myers (2018): 262-3.
[59] See, e.g. Hor. *Carm.* 2.15.4, 2.18.21; Sen. *Controv.* 2.1.13, 5.5; Sen. *Ep.* 86.6-7, 122-8; Plin. *Nat.* 12.6, 12.13. Note that the term *luxuria* is also used frequently in Latin to denote the immoderate growth of plants; see OLD, *sv. 'luxuria', 'luxurio', 'luxuriosus'*
[60] On Tacitus' accounts in Books 11 and 12 of the *Annals*, see, for example, Boatwright (1998); Beard (1998); Pagán (2006), 65-92; and Von Stackelberg (2009b).
[61] See, e.g. Suet. *Calig.* 37.2-3; Tac. *Ann.* 13.47.2, 15.33.1, 39.1-2, 15.53.1; Suet. *Nero* 22.2. Cf. Edwards (1993), 173-206, on 'prodigal pleasures'.
[62] Lawson (1950): 97.

sterility…the less usable the produce the garden yields, the more morally suspect it becomes.[63]

During the imperial period, although some sites did retain the title of *horti*, such as the *Horti Maecenatis*, many of these 'pleasure parks' were instead called *porticus*.[64] Essentially enclosed public parks, this type of garden quickly became a prominent feature within the city of Rome; and, unlike many *horti*, we are able to confidently reconstruct some of these spaces – such as the *Porticus Pompeiana* and the *Porticus Liviae* — based on literary and archaeological evidence.[65] These porticoed gardens were designed to imitate the Greek *gymnasia*, with large green areas featuring covered walkways (hence 'porticus') designed to give shade and seclusion. Interestingly, Farrar suggests that this adoption of Hellenistic porticoes to enclose these public garden spaces may have been partially motivated by the need to distinguish the greenery from the surrounding streets, since maps locating the ancient portico gardens of Rome reveal their close proximity to other structures; and this suggestion fits once again with our understanding of the garden space as being deliberately set-aside and bounded.[66]

As we shall see in chapter four, many of these public parks also had sacred or religious connotations. The *Porticus Pompeiana*, for example, was a space for public entertainment and leisure, but the inclusion of the Temple of Venus Victrix within the green space suggested that 'the garden was a sacred *kēpos*, a planted enclosure dedicated to the service of a god and a temple'; and, similarly, Caesar's gardens were also part of a building programme that promoted Venus as the mother of the *gens Julia*.[67] Roman religion was deeply connected to agricultural and vegetal deities, so it comes as no surprise that *religio*, the sense of divine reverence, also extended to garden spaces.[68] Indeed, according to Neudecker, only in mythical retrospective did religious experiences of nature ever take place in entirely untouched environments, whereas, in reality, they always happened in more-or-less ordered spaces, in nature treated or tamed by human hands.[69] As part of, in addition to, or alongside

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[63] Pagán (2006): 9.
[64] On the early *porticus* gardens of Rome, see Coarelli (1997), 515f. The *Horti Maecenatis* is perhaps most famously documented in Hor. *S.* 1.8.
[65] On the *Porticus Pompeiana* as Rome's first 'public park', see Gleason (1994). Both Martial (2.14.10) and Propertius (2.32.12) also mention the greenery of this site. The *Porticus Liviae* is mentioned several times in the ancient sources as a popular resort (Ov. *Ars.* 1,72; Plin. *Nat.* 14.3.11; Strabo *Geog.* 5.3.8), but its exact location in the city is now unknown. Farrar (1998), 180-6, details the evidence for five sites within the city of Rome that she categorises as 'public portico gardens' – the *Porticus Pompeiana*, the *Templum Pacis*, the *Divus Claudius*, the *Adonaea*, and the *Porticus Liviae.*
[66] Farrar (1998): 181.
[67] Von Stackelberg (2009): 89.
[68] Von Stackelberg (2009): 86. Note that modern English derives both 'cult' and 'cultivate' from the Latin verb *colere*, meaning both 'to worship' and 'to cultivate'.
[69] Neudecker (2015): 220.

public *horti* and *porticus*, such 'sacred groves' thus fulfil our basic definition of garden space in that they are a form of constructed nature, based on the fundamental action of 'cutting out' a specific area of land and designating it as 'other'.[70]

The connection between religious practice and garden space can also be seen through the presence of garden altars or shrines (*lararia*) in many houses.[71] These cultic sites were prominent features in Pompeian households, and, significantly, approximately one-fifth of all these household shrines were located within garden spaces.[72] The shrine or altar could be constructed in the form of a niche, an *aedicula*, or simply a wall painting, and they featured two common elements: first, a representation of the god to be worshipped; and, second, some provision for sacrifice. Most of these shrines tended to be dedicated to the worship of the *Lares* or the *Penates*, but there is also evidence for the worship of other gods such as Diana (House VII.6.3) or Hercules (House II.8.6).[73]

The religious or sacred connotations of Roman garden space also extended to the funerary context in the form of tomb gardens (*cepotaphium*).[74] Unfortunately, evidence for actual plantings, in the form of root cavities, is seldom encountered at actual tomb sites, but there are many texts and inscriptions that can account for their existence and design, as well as examples of tombs decorated with garden paintings.[75] An inscription from a tomb in Rome,

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[70] This intersection between sacred space and garden space will be explored more thoroughly in chapter four. It should be noted that there is no single authoritative study on sacred groves in the Roman world, although useful scholarly interpretation can be found in Stara-Tedde (1905); Grimal (1943), 53-6, 165-71; Coarelli (1993); Bodel (1994); Scheid (2003); Hunt (2016); and Carroll (2018).

[71] Studies of *lararia* include Boyce (1937), who provides a corpus of the *lararia* found in Pompeii; Orr (1978); Fröhlich (1991); Foss (1997), who analyses *lararia* as a factor in the physical and temporal organisation of the house; and Giacobello (2008), who sets out to question the scholarly trend of identifying all domestic cultic spaces as *lararia*.

[72] See Jashemski (1979), 115; and Foss (1997), 217.

[73] Von Stackelberg (2009): 87. Note that Giacobello (2008) makes a distinction between *lararia* 'proper' and so-called 'secondary' *lararia*: the former designates shrines dedicated specifically to the *Lares* (who watched over food preparation and thus functioned as guardians of the family), and were located within or surrounding the kitchen areas of the house; whereas the latter denotes shrines dedicated to other deities who protected the house in a more general way, and thus were located in other areas of the house (such as the garden).

[74] Both Jashemski (1979), 141, and Campbell (2008), 34, note that the importance placed on garden space in death is hardly surprising in the Roman context, since the space was such an important part of life. The most up to date summary of Roman tomb gardens is Bodel (2018); cf. Campbell (2008), esp. 34-9, who provides a succinct summary of the key evidence across all formats; and Brundrett (2011), who focuses on the interconnection of physical and sacral elements in funerary landscapes, and questions how the sacral role of natural and productive landscapes corresponded to similar cultural ideas for the Romans.

[75] Bodel (2018), 199, notes one rare archaeological example from Scafati, where archaeologists were able to identify a planted tomb, delimited by a low tufa wall, and framed by an elliptical arrangement of trees. Gregori (1987-8), 175-88, compiles a list of more than fifty inscriptions from structures in Rome dating from the Late Republican and early Imperial periods, all of which contain either the word *hortus* or *cepotaphium*. One example of a tomb featuring garden-inspired paintings is the so-called Tomb of the Garlands at Pompeii, located outside the Porta Herculaneum and dating from the Late Republican period; see Kockel (1983), 126-51.

for example, describes the site as being planted with vines, fruits, flowers, and greenery;[76] further afield, an inscription in Gaul provides a detailed description of a large tomb garden that would require the assistance of three landscapers for its upkeep;[77] and there are also two surviving plans of garden tombs on marble plaques.[78] What is particularly interesting about many of the inscriptions still available to us is that they include the phrase '*hortus cinctus maceria*', thus emphasising that the tomb garden in question was surrounded by a wall or enclosure.[79] In this sense, then, tomb gardens appear no different to other gardens, but, as with other religious or sacred garden spaces, it appears that it is particularly easy to incorporate gardens into funerary sites because of their shared emphasis on well-defined perimeters.[80] As Bodel has noted, the site of a Roman tomb was a *locus religiosus*, a place bound by *religio* and therefore not liable to any other use, and inscriptions showcase how Roman tomb owners tried to protect the cultivated lands attached to their monuments by declaring them inalienable from the tomb itself.[81]

Finally, in this brief survey of Roman gardens, let us consider the more 'ornamental' types found in a domestic context.[82] We have already noted that garden shrines were a prominent feature within Roman households, but this was certainly not the only type of garden space found in the *domus* or the *villa*. The earliest known evidence for domestic gardens in Pompeii reflects the characteristics of the traditional *hortus*: in the House of the Pansa, for example, one of the most significant examples of the old Samnite-style houses, the rear garden reveals a perfectly preserved planting pattern design for produce, the layout of which reflects the horticultural advice given by Pliny the Elder.[83] However, in line with the

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[76] *CIL* VI 10237 (*ILS* 7870).
[77] *CIL* XII 5708 (*ILS* 8379).
[78] *CIL* VI 9015 = 29847a (*ILS* 8120); *CIL* VI 29847; cf. Toynbee (1971), 98-9.
[79] For example, *CIL* VI 13823 (*ILS* 8352); *CIL* VI 10876; *CIL* VI 10237 (*ILS* 7870).
[80] However, it is important to note that, even though most Roman tomb gardens were protected by perimeter walls, not every wall around a tomb denotes the existence of a garden.
[81] For example, *CIL* VI 22518 = 'this place bound by a wall with its little sacred garden (*hortulo religioso*) and its little buildings'; *CIL* VI 29961 = 'this place or garden of about five twelfths of a *iugerum*, enclosed with a wall'; *CIL* XIV 2797 (*ILS* 8336) = 'this place as it is enclosed by a perimeter wall for the religious protection (*ad religionem*) of the tomb'.
[82] I use the term 'domestic' here, as opposed to 'private', due to the complexities of the public/private divide in Roman thought. Literary references to domestic gardens often emphasise a level of public visibility and access: Sen. *Ep.* 55.6 notes the public visibility of the garden of the residence of Vatia; Cic. *Att.* 12.37.2 insists that the site of the *horti* he wishes to purchase must be a match for his own *celebritas*; and Plin. *Ep.* 9.39 comments that the Temple of Ceres within his villa grounds is so well frequented that he had to build a portico to shelter visitors. On the *domus* as a threshold between public and private space, see Hales (2003), esp.40-60. Similarly, Von Stackelberg (2009), 68-9, argues that it is impossible to determine a concrete level of 'public' or 'private' in the *domus*, and a better solution is to think in terms of 'levels of permeability' or 'nodes of access'. Finally, Anguissola's (2012) edited volume seeks to quantify the access 'outsiders' may have to certain spaces in order to investigate the role of boundaries and privacy within the Roman house.
[83] Plin. *Nat.* 19.60. On the House of the Pansa (VI. 6.1), see Jashemski (1993), 127-8. The planting pattern of the rear garden is set out in a plan (pl. 42) by Charles Mazois, in the second volume of *Les ruines de Pompéi*.

development of public *horti* in the city of Rome, a more ornamental focus and shift to aesthetic pleasure quickly disseminated throughout domestic gardens from the second century BC.[84] This was not just a trend enjoyed by the upper echelons of Roman society in their sprawling villas; but, rather, it appears to be a cultural shift that filtered down into even the most modest of homes.[85] It should, of course, be noted, though, that even with the distinct shift from a focus on production to aesthetic pleasure, this was by no means a linear progression – 'productive' gardens did not simply cease to exist, and archaeological evidence demonstrates that some 'ornamental' gardens also produced food.[86]

The introduction of the so-called 'peristyle' garden design, in particular, dramatically changed the style, layout, and ideological significance of Roman domestic gardens, and, in a similar way to the *porticus*, these more ornamental garden types within the home are predominantly labeled by scholars in reference to the main architectural structure that surrounds them.[87] The peristyle garden, in line with the design of the *porticus*, was ideally surrounded by four covered walkways supported by a series of columns (although sometimes fewer walkways, if space did not allow it). Originally imprinted on to the old *hortus* at the rear of the house, later examples show an evolution towards a more central location within the building;[88] and the material record of the gardens of Pompeii makes clear that fences or other partitions were an important aspect in the design of the peristyle, despite there no longer being any functional requirement to keep cattle or people out (as was the case for Columella).[89] Although occasionally enclosed by a low masonry wall, more often than not it was a wooden fence that created the boundary between the centralised green space and the surrounding

[84] On gardens within the *domus* across the provinces, see Morvillez (2018).
[85] For an introduction to the *otium* villas of the elite, see, for example, D'Arms (1970); Ackerman (1990); Mielsche (1987); Purcell (1996); Marzano (2007); and Zarmakoupi (2014). Zanker (1979) specifically discusses how the houses of Pompeii and Herculaneum were designed to emulate the style of luxury villas. Mayer (2012), however, in his exploration of the 'urban middle classes' of Roman society, argues against Zanker's 'trickle-down' concept of Roman housing and its décor; and, instead, he asks us to reconsider whether using the lens of aristocratic culture might cloud our view of Roman housing, before proposing a more personalised mode of interpretation. On the ideology of villa gardens, see Hartswick (2018); and, on the archaeological examples of villa gardens around the empire, see Macauley-Lewis (2018).
[86] Jashemski (1979): 31. On the relationship between gardens of display and luxury, and those that were more 'productive', see also Jashemski (2017).
[87] The term 'peristyle garden' is really modern convention, first coined by Swoboda (1919) as *gartenperistyl*, and later refined by Grimal (1943) as *jardin-peristyle*. Leach (1997), 59, notes that the term 'peristyle' is used infrequently in Roman literature and, when it is used, it refer to more 'public' spaces, as opposed to the domestic context it now commonly associated with.
[88] For a diagram of the evolution of the design and placement of garden space within a 'typical' *domus*, see Farrar (1998): 16.
[89] Jashemski (1979): 49-51. A short summary of fencing and boundary elements in the Roman garden can also be found in Farrar (1998), 32-5. For a discussion of the different types of raw materials used to create garden boundaries, see Bergmann (2014), 260-72.

walkways:[90] the two holes found in many columns surrounding garden spaces, often with pieces of heavy nail still inside them, indicate that a fence had once been attached.[91] Sometimes a vertical cut was made in the columns to accommodate the end of a piece of fence;[92] or, alternatively, the fence was attached to the end of the columns, thus enclosing them.[93]

However, although the term 'peristyle' has become a byword for all domestic gardens that are not the traditional *hortus*, it is actually only one of many terms used by ancient authors to signify garden spaces of the more 'ornamental' or 'aesthetic' variety.[94] Vitruvius, for example, in *de Architectura*, employs a range of terminology to denote cultivated garden landscapes:[95] not just *hortus*, or *porticus*, or *peristyle*, but also *silvae*, a luxury plantation;[96] *topia* or *ars topiara*, the art of arranging plants into shapes to evoke certain associations;[97] *viridia* a novel display of well-arranged plants;[98] and also *xystus*, garden walkways.[99] Furthermore, Leach, in her examination of the Vitruvian terminology, notes that 'peristyle' appears interchangeable with other labels, such as *gymnasium* and *palaestra*, which emphasise the columned design; and also less technical terms, such as *ambulacrum*, which emphasise the space's function.[100] Whether or not the term 'peristyle' is specifically used, though, and whether or not the garden space is actually surrounded by a true peristyle structure, what we can say about this group of domestic gardens is that they all represent the same ideological shift away from production that we saw in more 'public' *horti* and *porticus* parks.

The peristyle structure itself also crystallises an important aspect of the way boundaries function in many of the garden spaces we will encounter – namely, the way in

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[90] An example of a garden featuring a stone wall in between columns can be found in the House of the Ship Europa (I.xv.3); see Jashemski (1993), 61.
[91] Anguissola (2012) notes that there is a potential for glass to be included as fencing 'panels', but accepts that it is almost impossible to determine in most examples. Vipard (2001-2) and *id.* (2003) deals specifically with the issue of columned porticoes enclosed by glass panels.
[92] As seen in the House of the Silver Wedding (V.ii.i); see Jashemski (1993), 113.
[93] As seen in the large peristyle garden in the House of the Faun (VI.xiii); see Jashemski (1993), 61.
[94] Scholars such as Leach (1997) and Allison (1993) and (2001) have warned of the modern misapplication of ancient terminology, arguing that the analysis of material remains is often compromised by the use of literary texts as a comparative.
[95] Gleason (2013), 16-17, provides a useful summary of the terms used by Vitruvius. She also notes that, for too long, modern translations for Latin and Greek landscape terms have been too limited; although scholars such as Landgren (2004), who analyses the use and frequency of specific plant terms, have begun to rectify these translation issues. Von Stackelberg (2009), 16-21, also summarises other terms that can relate to the garden and its features, such as *holerarium* (a place where edible greens are bought), and *pomearium* (an orchard).
[96] Vitrv. *De Arch.* 5.12.4, 6.5.2.
[97] Vitrv. *De Arch.* 5.7.9, 7.5.2.
[98] Vitrv. *De Arch.* 5.9.5, 6.3.10.
[99] Vitrv. *De Arch.* 5.11.1.
[100] Leach (2004): 34-36.

which physical boundaries often act as manifestations of more conceptual or metaphorical frameworks. For Zarmakoupi, for example, the peristyle structure acts as an architectural framework for ornamental garden space that mediated between associations of discipline and excess to create a space of aesthetic pleasure that was specifically acceptable to the Romans of the Late Republic and Early Empire periods.[101] Although ornamental green spaces had previously evoked the 'excessive *luxuria* of the Hellenistic East', by 'subordinating' this potentially excessive pleasure element to the disciplined architectural form of the Greek *gymanasia*, the Roman peristyle garden design created an enclosed green space wherein the 'unruly nature of the corrupting Eastern influence' could be tamed.[102] Thus, 'by framing the architecture of pleasure within the architecture of discipline…[in the form of the peristyle]…Roman designers domesticated the threatening *luxuria* of the Hellenistic East and used architectural design in the construction of their identity'.[103]

This architectural framing of green space here, and the ideological mediation between discipline and excess, also points to another layer of mediation at work, this time between 'closed' (interior) and 'open' (exterior/outdoor) space — the typical location of the peristyle often leads to it being a focal point in the flow of space throughout the *domus* or *villa*, and this, in turn, gives the space the feel of a transitional zone. Leach, for example, describes the peristyle garden's function as 'giving an elegant route of access to other privileged rooms in the house'; and she suggests that 'with the orderly files of columns, the physical appearance of the peristyle signals passage', and 'its function as a walkway' is 'usually highlighted by repetitive patterns of wall design with strong vertical orientation to reinforce that of the columns'.[104] In this way, the peristyle quite obviously acts as a space of mediation and transition between different domestic spaces, but, as I will demonstrate in my case study analysis, mediation between oppositions is also key to how boundaries function across the many manifestations of garden space.

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[101] This is, broadly, the focus of Zarmakoupi's (2014) monographs on villas and landscapes in the Bay of Naples (c.100BC – AD79), which examines the ways in which the integration of peristyle-type structures into Roman villas represented a 'new ideology' of Roman villa culture.

[102] Zarmakoupi (2014): 103-114. Here, the author identifies two key influences on the 'vocabulary' of the peristyle garden, each contributing to its ideological connotations: first, the porticoed structure itself is identified as being influenced by the architectural forms of the Greek educational institution, the *gymnasium*; and, second, the actual greenery is understood as a Persian/Hellenistic *paradeisos*-themed space for pleasure (cf. n. 5, above). The author does notes that there is no evidence of a conscious cultural reference to the *paradeisos*, but concludes that the lavish green spaces of Roman villas 'made all the references to luxury and pleasure with which the East was associated'. On Roman aspirations to emulate Greek architectural forms, cf. Wallace-Hadrill (2008), 169-80.

[103] Zarmakoupi (2010): 626. This article is an earlier version of one section of the 2014 monograph.

[104] Leach (2004): 34. Cf. Vitr. *De Arch*. 6.5.1, who categorises the peristyle among the places shared with 'outsiders' (*loca communia cum extraneis*), which even uninvited people (*invocati de populo*) have the right to enter. Similarly Anguissola (2012) focuses on the role of the peristyle in 'shaping the private dimension of the house through skilled management of circulation, access, and visibility'.

Issues with Categorisation

What can we take away, then, from this short summary of garden types within the Roman imagination of the Late Republic and Early Empire? My analysis shows that, for the Romans, the garden was, just as it is today, a recognisable and defined space within their environment that could entail a variety of different designs and formats, each providing a setting for, or a backdrop to, a whole range of horticultural, artistic, social, theological, and even political activities and practices. Furthermore, despite the range of cultivated spaces that fall under the category of gardens, each sub-category demonstrates a basic adherence to the transcultural understanding of the garden as a marked-off or segregated space – whether that be in the form of fences to keep cattle out, walls to designate the sanctity of a specific zone, or columns and partitions that mark the transition into a 'different' part of the domestic space.

However, despite the ubiquity of boundary elements, the ways in which the Romans used their garden terminology reveals underlying tensions within the categorisation of their garden spaces. Indeed, although modern scholars have used the term *hortus* to signify the whole range of garden spaces, it is clear that between the term and its translation as 'garden' lies an 'ambiguity of meaning that stands as an obstacle' to understanding the full breadth of its potential manifestations.[105] This ambiguity is highlighted by the broad range of other terms also used by the Romans to denote the different sub-categories within their overall notion of 'the garden', and the ways in which they appeared to struggle to definitively distinguish, label, and identify different spatial areas. In particular, we noted the difficulty in differentiating between *hortus, heredium*, and *villa*; and the ways in which architectural terms, such as *porticus* or *peristyle*, could be used both to denote a specific area or an architectural structure within the public *horti* or a *domus* or *villa*, and also as interchangeable terms for the garden space as a whole. Finally, it is also clear that all these garden sub-categories also operate, to varying degrees, within broader spatial networks or categories - whether that be a large agricultural complex, a public park, a vast villa, a modest house, or a sacred site – and, despite the emphasis on the garden's 'otherness', quite how each garden site is separate from its networks is something that is not always obvious.

If we reflect back on the Sumerian hymn discussed earlier, then, it appears that, in the Roman imagination, there is a similar tension between defining the garden through physical segregation and struggling to conceptualise the basic divide between garden and not-garden. Although the garden may be thought of as 'other', it is not always exclusively 'separate' –

[105] Von Stackelberg (2009): 9.

gardens remain intimately connected to the rest of their surroundings to the extent that the boundary between garden and not-garden, and also the distinction between different types of gardens, at times involves little distinction at all. As Bodel has argued, the idea of a garden is often relative, 'based on perception and attitudes rather than objective reality', and this can lead to a slipperiness in the designations and terms used to describe individual garden spaces.[106] In fact, Roman writers clearly play with this flexibility in language, with Pliny the Elder using the same phrase (*pensiles…hortos*) to describe both the cucumber beds of the emperor Tiberius and the famous Hanging Gardens of Babylon;[107] and Martial comparing a window box to a suburban estate.[108] Furthermore, the emphasis on physical boundaries, which automatically suggest a division between two categories, also points to the garden's potential role in mediating between these categories, and all of their accompanying (and often problematic) tensions.

Thus, despite the fact that this chapter set out to define the garden, it appears that in many instances it is simply easier to say what the garden *is not*, rather than actually what it *is,* and exactly where its limits lie. Garden space cannot, and perhaps should not, be categorised in the black and white sense that its boundaries suggest – it is a grey, fuzzy, interstitial space open to many potential interpretations – and it is this that not only makes the garden so intriguing, but that also forms the basis of my own exploration, for which I will now set the parameters in chapter two.

[106] Bodel (2018): 209. Cf. Purcell (1987a), esp.189, who argues that, although the Romans had quite a sophisticated notion of different spatial areas, they did not necessarily make strict divisions or oppositions between them; for example, it would not have occurred to the Romans to say 'here is the edge of the *continentia aedificia*, the built-up area, the *rus*, countryside, begins here'.
[107] Plin. *Nat.* 19.49, 19.64.
[108] Mart. 11.18.1-2: *Donasti, Lupe, rus sub urbe nobis; sed rus est mihi maius in fenestra/* Lupus, you have given me a country estate, but I have a bigger estate in my window.

Chapter Two

Approaching Ancient Roman Garden Space

Having reflected on the transcultural understanding of the garden as a bounded and cultivated space, and the general Roman adherence to these two fundamental conditions, it is clear that boundaries played an important role in the ways in which garden space was defined and perceived by the Romans of the Late Republic and Early Empire. However, despite the ubiquity of physical boundary elements across the range of garden sub-categories, many of these spaces also demonstrate the difficulty in conceptually separating or distinguishing the garden from its surroundings. How, then, should we approach an analysis of this issue? And how will that analysis assist or, perhaps, complicate our understanding of Roman garden space? In this chapter, I will set out the theoretical framework for my analysis of Roman garden boundaries, and also introduce the six case studies that I have chosen to interrogate the concepts established in chapter one. First, though, I will offer a brief survey of the history of Roman scholarship, since this will allow me to contextualise my own approach within current scholarly debates and demonstrate how I seek to move these debates forward.

The Study of Ancient Roman Gardens

For decades, the only comprehensive survey of Roman gardens was to be found in Grimal.[1] This seminal 1940s study provided an account of Roman gardens, in theory and in practice, from the Late Republican period through to the Early Empire; and, in four parts, Grimal analyses the Roman garden from a number of different angles: part one examines how location and place influenced garden practices; part two catalogues the known gardens within the city of Rome; part three looks at the relationships between the garden and the architecture of the house; and part four focuses on literary treatments of the garden and, more broadly, Roman attitudes towards nature.

Jashemski's pioneering archaeological research on the gardens of Pompeii and, later, the landscapes of the Bay of Naples, provided an important stimulus for the study of ancient gardens.[2] Beginning in the 1970s, Jashemski combed through every inch of garden space in the city of Pompeii, carefully documenting the surviving evidence in all its manifestations – including garden plants, architectural structures, ornamental features, as well as depictions of

[1] Grimal (1943). Since its original publication, Grimal's work has been revised three times to account for new archaeological evidence, with the latest edition published in 1984.
[2] On the history and development of garden archaeology, see Gleason (1994), 1-24; and Malek (2013), 41-72.

gardens and plants in the surviving wall painting.[3] Her creation of a systematic methodology for the excavation and study of the Vesuvian garden allowed scholars to address underappreciated aspects of the daily life of Pompeii, namely the activities and economies of garden cultivation.

The accessibility, importance, and unique preservation of the garden archaeological sites along the Bay of Naples, revealed to us by Jashemski's work, has unsurprisingly paved the way for more nuanced analysis of individual garden sites, but it has also informed a variety of studies on the art and architecture of Roman domestic space.[4] Two of the first contributions to the renewed study of Roman gardens were born out of two 1980s Dumbarton Oaks colloquia on the history of landscape architecture: *Ancient Roman Gardens* focuses mainly on the archaeological evidence for ornamental villa gardens; whereas *Ancient Roman Villa Gardens* incorporates more literary evidence, alongside the archaeological, into similar debates.[5] Later, Jashemski and Meyer edited a further collection of essays on *The Natural History of Pompeii*.[6] This volume builds on Jashemski's earlier archaeological work by considering many of the themes of the earlier collections – for instance, literary evidence, inscriptions, paintings, architecture, – but it also adds the expertise of botanical scientists on soil analysis and plant identification, in an attempt to construct a 'natural history' of the Vesuvian region that is simply not possible at any other ancient site.[7]

The renewed focus on Roman gardens has also led to a series of publications since the late 1990s. Farrar's survey of *Ancient Roman Gardens*, for example, predominantly focuses on the architectural and ornamental features of the garden, with particular attention given to issues of construction, layout, and design.[8] Carroll's overview of ancient gardens in the Mediterranean and Near East, meanwhile, surveys primarily archaeological evidence, but also supports this evidence with some appropriate texts.[9] Most importantly, this survey avoids one of the major pitfalls of ancient garden scholarship, in that it does not insist on a strict division between utilitarian and ornamental gardens. As my own survey of garden types and their conceptual slipperiness suggested, Carroll notes how gardens of the ancient world often included mixed planting patterns of species we would now consider either exclusively

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[3] See Jashemski (1979), later followed by Jashemski (1993).
[4] Example of more nuanced garden archaeological analysis included, but are not limited to, Gleason (2010), on the Villa Arianna at Stabiae; *ibid.* (2014), on Herod's Royal Garden in Caesarea; Klynne and Liljenstolpe (2000), on the Villa of Livia; and Landgren (2004), on the construction of *viridia*.
[5] MacDougall and Jashemski (1981); and MacDougall (1987).
[6] Jashemski and Meyer (2002).
[7] We should also note the studies of ancient plants in Latin literature, many of which were written mainly to assist readers of Virgil's *Eclogues* and *Georgics*: for example, Sargeaunt (1920); Abbe (1965); and Maggiuli (1995).
[8] Farrar (1998).
[9] Caroll (2003).

productive or ornamental; and so, rather than defining a garden in this way, she argues that the activities of the garden should be used as a characteristic feature. Bowe similarly provides a survey of gardens throughout the Roman world, but this is not especially detailed and relies heavily on illustrations;[10] and Farrar has followed up her earlier work by producing a new survey, this time focusing on gardens and gardeners of the ancient world.[11]

In contrast to these surveys aimed at the general reader, and perhaps taking the earlier Dumbarton Oaks collections as a template, a significant proportion of the scholarship on Roman gardens is presented to us in the form of edited collections. Cima and La Rocca's volume, for example, features twenty-one contributions from an international conference, which took the gardens of the city of Rome as its starting point.[12] Although the methodologies and some of the conclusions in this volume are now slightly dated, the contributions remain important because they extend the analysis of gardens beyond the confines of Rome and the Italian peninsula. In particular, the volume draws particular attention to the excavated gardens at Conimbriga (Portugal) and Fishbourne (United Kingdom), therefore illuminating features of Roman garden that transcend a particular location.[13]

Gleason's edited volume, which contributes to an even broader series on the 'cultural history' of gardens, addresses three key questions related to ancient gardens in general, not just Roman ones:[14] why were gardens created; how were they used and visited and how does their representation in different arts express the position and value of the garden within its culture? The volume is divided into eight chapters entitled 'Design', 'Types of Gardens', 'Plantings', 'Use and Reception', 'Meaning', 'Verbal Representation', 'Visual Representation', and 'Gardens and the Large Landscape'; and, in this way, it covers, in broad terms, all of the major aspects of the study of Roman gardens. However, because the volume covers such a vast chronological period (sixth century BC to sixth century AD), the descriptions do not often provide enough detail to satisfy specialists in any given area. A Fondation Hardt volume, however, is more successful in providing detailed and nuanced analysis of garden space.[15] In contrast to the comprehensive, but sometimes vague, overview of gardens in the Gleason volume, this edited collection of essays focuses on individual contributions concerning specific moments and locations across the Mediterranean; and it is useful in that it not only demonstrates the broad range of approaches to garden space, but also

[10] Bowe (2004).
[11] Farrar (2016).
[12] Cima and La Rocca (1998). Cf. The review of the volume by Purcell (2001), in his important article on 'Dialectical Gardening'.
[13] On Fishbourne, cf. Cuncliffe (1971). On Conimbriga, cf. de Alarcão and Etienne (1981) and *ead.* (1986). For Roman gardens across the provinces more generally, see Bowe (2004), 111-139.
[14] Gleason (2013).
[15] Coleman (2014).

includes the discussion from the original conference that led to the publication, therefore highlighting potential avenues for further investigation.[16]

Finally, for the most comprehensive and up-to-date survey of Roman gardens, we can turn to the vast *Gardens of the Roman Empire* project, which consists of two volumes: the first, a collection of essays born out of another Dumbarton Oaks symposium; and, the second, a catalogue of all the know gardens of the Roman world, with accompanying bibliography.[17] The essay volume, begun by Wilhelmina Jashemski and brought to fruition by the other editors following her death, reflects the papers presented at the original conference, but has been updated over time to include current research, and has sections outlining the main types of gardens and their constituent parts (e.g. water supply, sculpture, etc.), as well as the experience of gardens as revealed by both literature and art. The volume, perhaps unsurprisingly due to Jashemski's influence, does have a clear archaeological emphasis, but it is still an invaluable source for any scholar of Roman gardens.[18]

Since the study of Roman gardens is, relatively, new, it is perhaps unsurprising that the survey format of edited volumes has been the dominant output for scholarly work; and this is a positive approach for a developing field, since it provides recognition of the broad range of evidence available to us across different media sources, and also a foundational analysis of individual garden sites that can then be used to identify and highlight potential avenues for further investigation. However, on the whole, each individual contribution to these volumes tends to either study the garden space solely from within the narrow bounds of separate disciplines (art, archaeology, literature, botanical analysis, etc.), or they focus exclusively on one of the sub-categories of garden space without any cross comparison.[19] This division within edited volumes, in turn, reflects a broader two-strand approach to the study of Roman gardens, with scholars focusing on either material evidence (art historical or archaeological) to reach conclusions on what gardens *looked* like, or on literary treatments to reach conclusions on what gardens *meant* for the society that created them.

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[16] Of particular interest in the collection, for the scope of this thesis, are the articles of Marzano, who considers the role 'botanical imperialism' has to play in the construction of elite self-representation; Caneva, who analyses the symbolic content of the floral elements in wall-paintings from Rome and Pompeii; and Bergmann, who considers the role of the boundary in Roman gardens and their representations.

[17] Jashemski, Gleason, Hartswick, and Malek (2018). On the history of the project, see pp. 1-14.

[18] The editors, for example, note that their hope is that 'the work will encourage *archaeologists*, who have not been concerned with the possible gardens of their sites, to examine them more carefully' (emphasis my own).

[19] This is evident, for example, in the chapters in Jashemski et. al. (2018), which include, but are not limited to, 'Produce Gardens', 'The Garden in the *Domus*', 'Representations of Gardens in Roman Literature', 'Frescoes in Roman Gardens'.

The Spatial Turn – Soja's Thirdspace and Foucault's Heterotopia

The lack of cross-media or cross-category analysis in the study of Roman gardens is all the more surprising because scholars of the ancient world, and of ancient gardens more specifically, have shown a desire to analyse different sites in response to the more sophisticated approaches to space that followed the 'spatial turn' post-Lefebvre (as detailed in chapter one).[20] Pagán, for example, has looked to literature to examine not only how the Romans thought about gardens, but, also, how they used the garden to think about and define themselves.[21] Through an analysis of four different 'garden texts' (Columella Book 10, Horace *Satires* 1.8, Tacitus *Annals* Book 11, and Augustine's *Confessions* Book 8) she examines how the garden, 'with all of its physical and metaphysical meanings', shapes the 'ideological import of a work of literature'; and she argues that, if gardens are a way of 'being in the world', then literature about gardens becomes 'a way of articulating that existence'.[22] More broadly, Spencer has used the specific garden sites of the *Horti Sallustiani* and the *Porticus Pompeiana*, and the villa letters of Pliny the Younger to explore how the Romans conceived of and responded to ideas of landscape.[23]

Von Stackelberg's monograph on 'space, sense, and society' in the Roman garden is perhaps the closest to a true intermedial analysis, and the author is correct in her claim that she is the first to examine Roman gardens using a combination of literary and archaeological evidence in conjunction with contemporary space theory.[24] In particular, she proposes Soja's concept of 'Thirdspace' as a 'critical framework' through which we can approach the garden space and its 'interplay of multiple associations'.[25] Soja's framework seeks to demonstrate an important intersection between real world perspectives ('Firstspace') and imagined representations of that same world ('Secondspace').[26] Within this tripartite formulation of space, Thirdspace is understood as a space of extraordinary openness and critical exchange;

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[20] The analysis and exploration of the city space of Rome has been a popular avenue for such analysis: for example, Edwards (1996), on textual approaches to the city of Rome; Edwards and Woolf (2003), on Rome as a 'cosmopolis'; and Larmour and Spencer (2007), on time, space, and memory in Rome. More generally, the 'production of space in Latin literature' has been the subject of a recent edited volume by Fitzgerald and Spentzou (2018). Many of these works have been influenced by the growth of interest in the 'psychogeographies' of urban form, which refers to the effect of geographical setting on the mood and behaviour of individuals (as defined in *Internationale situationniste* 1, 1958).
[21] Pagán (2006).
[22] Pagán (2006): 2, 5.
[23] Spencer (2010), esp. 113-34 (on Pliny's villa gardens), and 161-71 (on the *Horti Sallustiani* and the *Porticus Pompeiana*).
[24] Von Stackelberg (2009).
[25] Von Stackelberg (2009): 48.
[26] In this way, Thirdspace builds on Lefebvre's notion of the *espace vécu*, cf. n.15, chpt. 1. Soja (1996), 62, states that, although Thirdspace is not exactly the same as the *espace vécu*, it still retains the multiple meanings Lefebvre (1974) ascribed to social space. He says that Thirdspace is 'both a space that is distinguishable from other spaces (physical and mental, or Firstspace and Secondspace) and a transcending composite of all spaces.

and, most significantly, the concept seeks to reject traditional binaries or dichotomies and, instead, establish a space wherein perspectives previously considered incompatible can be encompassed to create postmodern 'both/and also' analyses, rather than simple 'either/or' conclusions.[27]

For Von Stackelberg, then, Firstspace is formed of the material garden and its constituent parts (trees, lawns, flowerbeds, ornaments, etc.), Secondspace consists of representations (pictoral and literary) of this material reality, and Thirdspace is the lived and practiced reality of the garden or, to put it another way, the cultural value of the activities and events that are located there. In this application of Soja's framework, the author uses Thirdspace to comprehend how potentially alternate physical realities and literary conceptions of garden space can be perceived as a 'palimpsest, with one overlying the other';[28] and she argues that the true essence of what constitutes the garden space cannot be fully embodied in either First or Secondspace but, rather, it exists in a Thirdspace between the two.[29] Von Stackelberg thus demonstrates how Thirdspace can be a useful platform from which to approach Roman gardens, since it allows us to step back from individual sites, texts, or representations by 'relocating the garden within the wider framework of conceptual space'.[30] Her approach is therefore important in pointing to a way of understanding the interaction between different types of gardens across different types of media without forcing us to push them together in a naïve way.

One consequence of a tripartite understanding of space such as Thirdspace is the emergence of so-called 'heterotopias', a category of space proposed by Michel Foucault in which 'the nature of the spaces of the world is debated and also produced', and a category of space within which we can include garden space.[31] According to Foucault, the space in which we live, the space that 'claws and gnaws at us', should not be interpreted as a void 'in which we place individuals and things', but, rather, as a 'set of relations' irreducible to simple

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[27] Soja (1996), 5, states that 'in this critical thirding, the original binary choice is not dismissed entirely but is subjected to a creative process of restricting that draws selectively and strategically from two opposing categories to open new alternatives'.
[28] Von Stackelberg (2009): 48.
[29] In one application of Soja's theory, Von Stackelberg uses Thirdspace to explore Pliny's Tuscan villa letter (*Ep.* 5.6), describing his gardens as neither fictive nor real, but existing in a Thirdspace where rhetoric and reality converge to create an 'endless dialectic of nature, reflecting art, reflecting nature'. This may also remind us of the less theoretical, but certainly parallel, argument of Francis and Hester, on the garden's simultaneous existence as 'an idea, a place, and an action', cf. n.21, chpt. 1.
[30] Von Stackelberg (2009): 49.
[31] Fitzgerald and Spentzou (2018): 9. The main source, in English, for the concept of 'heterotopia' is Foucault (1986) – this text is a translation of Foucault's (1984), *Des espaces autres*, itself a transcript of a lecture given in 1967. Previously, Foucault also outlined the concept of heterotopia within the preface of *Les Mots et les choses* (1966). Subsequent analysis can be found in, e.g. Dehaene and de Cauter (2008); Johnson (2006); and Hetherington (1997).

distinctions.[32] Within this set of relations, Foucault is interested in looking at a category of sites that have the 'curious property of being in relation' to all other sites, but in such a way as to 'suspect, neutralize, or invert the set of relations that they happen to designate, mirror, or reflect' – such spaces, such 'heterotopias', are linked to all other sites, whilst also contradicting them, outside of all place, and yet also possible to locate in reality.[33]

Foucault attaches a set of six principles to the concept of heterotopia, with a diverse range of examples:[34] 1) they are a constant of every human culture, but can arise in diverse forms; 2) just as any given society can evolve through time, so too can any given heterotopia function in a different fashion according to the demands of this evolution; 3) they are capable of juxtaposing several seemingly incompatible spaces within a single space; 4) they are intrinsically linked to time, encapsulating either temporal discontinuity or accumulation; 5) they presuppose a system of opening and closing that both isolates them and makes them penetrable; and 6) they have the ability to function in relation to all the space that remains, either as a space of illusion or compensation.[35] Foucault's description of heterotopia thus suggests that these spaces are sites of difference, simultaneously central to a culture and, yet, also designated as areas where the 'normal' rules of that culture are suspended, neutralised, or reversed.

Most significantly, Foucault identifies the garden as 'perhaps the oldest example' of these 'contradictory sites', in that they are both 'the smallest parcel of the world' and also the 'totality of the world'.[36] This brief, but intriguing, suggestion that the garden should be understood as a heterotopia has subsequently found its way into the analysis of Roman garden space. Pagán for example, takes the categorisation seemingly at face value, merely noting that the term is a useful way of describing the garden space: constructed by society (first principle), but varying in design and function (second principle), the garden represents a microcosm of the world (third principle), maintained through seasonal activity (fourth principle), that is both separate from, and related to, the rest of space (fifth/sixth principle).[37]

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[32] Foucault (1986): 23.
[33] Foucault (1986): 24. For Foucault, utopias also belong to this category of 'other spaces', but are fundamentally different. Like utopias, heterotopias 'relate to other sites by representing and at the same time inverting them', but, unlike utopias, they are 'localised and real' – see Johnson (2006), 78.
[34] Foucault (1986): 24-7.
[35] Although each heterotopia involves all the principles to some extent, it is suggested that some are more 'fully functioning' or 'highly heterotopic' – see Foucault (1998), 182.
[36] Foucault (1986): 25-6. Nakaue (2008), 60, argues that Foucault identifies the garden as a heterotopic site because 'the arbitrariness of its definition is subjective' and 'its location is both physical and psychological'. Gardens have also been viewed, conversely, as part of *utopian* discourse, with Evans (2008), 23, for example, arguing that Roman gardens both 'reflect the paradisical aspirations and pitfalls of all utopian endeavours', and also offer 'the illusion of utopian possibility'.
[37] Pagán (2006): 15.

Von Stackelberg, meanwhile, also identifies the ancient Roman garden as a heterotopia, particularly picking up on the 'persistent association' between the concept and notions of resistance and/or transgressions;[38] and, since we know the garden space is so frequently associated with boundaries, it is unsurprising that such a space would invite transgression through the crossing of those boundaries. This, more specific, application of Foucault's term has been put forward by other scholars such as Hetherington, who argues that heterotopia are 'sites of marginality that act as postmodern spaces for resistance and transgression – treating them in many ways as liminal spaces';[39] and also Genocchio, who applies the term to 'counter-sites embodying a form of resistance to our increasingly surveyed, segregated and simulated socio-spatial order'.[40] It is in this context, then, that Von Stackelberg repositions the ancient Roman garden, arguing that the liminality of the space encourages 'encounters that diverge from the social norm', and she notes, for example, how both Plautus and Horace make their *horti* the 'gateway to illicit sexual access and the meeting of witches'.[41] Pagán, too, in her discussion of Horace's *Satire* 1.8, explores the notion of the transgression in the garden, this time in response to the frameworks imposed by the satiric genre. Although she does not use the term heterotopia specifically in her discussion, her earlier acknowledgement of the ancient garden as an example of this type of space surely informs her conclusion that the garden (as a heterotopia of deviation) is a 'logical symbol' for satire, a genre 'obsessed with social hierarchy and the distasteful transgressions of strictly imposed boundaries'.

Analysing Roman Garden Boundaries

Pagán's implied link between the categorisation of gardens as heterotopia and the importance of boundaries in establishing physical and conceptual frameworks around the garden space points to my final consideration in this brief survey of approaches to garden space. I have already noted the lack of true intermedial analysis of Roman gardens, and how this is surprising in light of the acceptance of contemporary space theory into the broader discourse on the ancient world; but it is also important to note the limited analysis of the garden boundary itself, another surprising omission considering the implications of the spatial turn and the fact that the boundary, a spatial delineation, is such an integral feature of the conception of the space.

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[38] Von Stackelberg (2009): 52. Cf. Johnson (2006), 81, for a response to this 'persistent association'.
[39] Hetherington (1997): 41.
[40] Gennochio (1995): 38. Cf. Shane's (2005) interpretation of heterotopias as 'sites of exception'.
[41] Von Stackelberg (2009): 52. Cf. Plaut. *Asin.* 742, *Truc.* 303; and Hor. *S.* 1.8.

In a general sense, gardens and their boundaries have been included in studies influenced by Hillier and Hanson's social theory of space, within which the notion of the boundary features prominently.[42] Within this system of social organisation, the boundary is viewed as enclosing 'a definite region of space', segregating it 'from what would otherwise be undifferentiated space'; and this segregation 'affects the level of presence-availability within the space, in that the probability than an encounter will occur by chance alone is significantly reduced'.[43] To apply this in more practical terms, for Hillier and Hanson, architecture is understood as an act of spatial division and, by extension, the art of social organisation as expressed through buildings. Talking about boundaries within architecture in this way, then, is inherently linked to thinking about power and control, and the primary concern of many scholars has been to question how certain dimensions (such as publicity/privacy, segregation/access, identity/difference) manifest themselves materially in the remains of structures.[44]

In a Roman context, such questions have particularly guided the study of Pompeian households, which, as we know from the summary of garden types in chapter one, often included a garden space of some form. Grahame, for example, has produced a number of studies that use Hillier and Hanson's method of 'access analysis' (presenting the house as a series of opened and closed cells linked by access routes) to analyse social structures and behaviours within the Roman household.[45] More recently, in her edited volume on the 'archaeology of intimacy' in Pompeii and beyond, Anguissola argues that 'any theoretical approach to archaeology' requires 'that we try and codify and quantify the access outsiders may have to an individual sphere'; and, in the introduction to the volume, she ties together the role of boundaries with privacy, again emphasising issues of power, access, and control.[46] In this context, it is unsurprising that the presence and importance of boundaries within the garden, and their initial implication of spatial segregation, has led scholars to align garden space with other building 'interiors', and interpret them in the same way as architectural space. Anguissola, for example, in her own article within the edited volume, is concerned with defining 'privacy' in the context of the peristyle gardens of the House of the Labyrinth (VI.11) and the House of the Golden Cupids (VI.16.7); and her analysis focuses on the 'role

[42] This theory is set out in Hillier and Hanson (1984).
[43] Grahame (1999): 54-5.
[44] Fisher (2006): 184. Cf. Von Stackelberg (2009), 55, who states that 'architecture sets the boundaries that structure relationships between people and controls the locations of bodies by restricting their movement through space. The more degrees of restriction…the more complex the patterns of social and economic interaction contained within'.
[45] See, for example, Grahame (1997), and *id.* (1999). I borrow the useful one sentence summary of access analysis from Allison (2001), 198, who also provides a useful critique on the limitations of the method.
[46] Anguissola (2012): 10.

of peristyles in shaping the private dimensions of a house through the skilled management of circulation, access, and visibility'.[47]

Von Stackelberg, too, specifically uses Hillier and Hanson's access analysis to examine the Pompeian houses of Octavius Quartio (II.2.2) and Menander (I.10.4) in order to highlight the different functions of their peristyle gardens within their respective floor plans.[48] In fact, she explicitly aligns her approach towards encounters within domestic garden spaces with architectural analysis, arguing that:

> *…for society to function, architecture must also weaken boundaries by enabling continuity between exterior and interior. Weakened boundaries generate encounters with the 'other', and it is encounters, not segregation, that generate social stability…This effect of weakened boundaries and encounter generation is usually considered wholly in architectural terms [but] it can also be present in the liminal space of the garden.*

The problem, though, with analysing the garden boundary in architectural terms is that it seems to reaffirm only the most basic understanding of the boundary as a simple marker of space. Although insights can be gained from approaches like access analysis, these methods seem to privilege a reading of garden boundaries centred on access and control, which, although important, are not exclusive. These architectural approaches, by focusing on quantifiable data, also seem to discount or downplay one of the most significant aspects of garden, as explored in chapter one – namely, their conceptual 'otherness' and how this is perceived – and they are limited in that they represent a theoretical framework not designed specifically for *garden* boundaries.

As a literary figure, the god Priapus, the defender of physical garden boundaries, has also been used as an invitation to think about other boundaries within the garden – spatial, sexual, and also generic. In response to the *Carmina Priapea* (*CP*), a collection of eighty epigrams that are either about, a dedication to, or in the voice of the god, Richlin, for example, has explored the semantic range of Priapus' boundaries in the Roman imagination; and her study proposes that Priapus is a metonymous figure for the setting and enforcing of sexual boundaries in the Roman garden.[49] Elomaa, meanwhile, considers boundaries in the *CP* for their literary connotations rather than as a reflection of a Roman institution.[50] Her thesis

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[47] Anguissola (2012): 32. Cf. Anguissola (2010), and Dickmann (1997). Note the similarity to Leach's categorisation of the peristyle as a transitional zone to which one gained access to other areas of the *domus* – see n.104, chpt. 1.
[48] Von Stackelberg (2009): 101-24, 144-9.
[49] Richlin (1992).
[50] Elomaa (2015).

aims to show that the poet of the *CP* 'opens up the division between open and closed spaces' to include other dichotomies, such as 'the naked and the concealed body, candid and obscene language, and access and exclusion'.[51] In particular, she argues that the book of the *CP*, like the figure of Priapus, is dependant on both openness and exclusion, and this broader tension is embodied in the tensions felt by the persona of Priapus – threatening movement vs. certain immobility, trespassing and punishing vs. temptation to cross boundaries, sacred vs. profane, etc.[52] Thus, although the *CP* is decidedly not about gardens – it is about Priapus – Elomaa shows how the book highlights many of the ambiguities we shall see at work in garden space itself; and, as a defender of the garden boundary, the figure of Priapus can become a symbol of the interpretive issues we face when approaching individual garden sites.

The work of Bettina Bergmann is one of the few examples of scholarship that exclusively considers the 'neglected yet key aspect of gardens' – the boundary.[53] Bergmann's article seeks to understand how a series of miniature, self-contained painted garden precincts from the first century BC may 'offer a glimpse of a lost art of landscape design';[54] and, through an examination of the constituent parts of the paintings (namely, the boundary), she seeks to, first, examine which parts reflected garden practice in reality, and, second, open up the discussion to explore whether these miniatures can be seen as expressions of the larger spatial and cultural environment of the first centuries BC and AD. In particular, she locates the Roman 'obsession' with boundaries in gardens within the broader cultural change of the Augustan period, arguing that the boundary takes on a new significance after Augustus' empire-wide census. The census involved a process of land registration, and Bergmann argues that the increased emphasis on colonization and centuriation meant visible boundaries gained more significance as proof of ownership, and so 'the gridded landscape became a metaphor for modernity, order, and culture'.

By highlighting the connection between new political systems and physical delineations of space, Bergmann's work demonstrates our earlier reading of the garden as a culturally constructed landscape; and she highlights how the garden boundary has the potential to take on more significance not just as a marker of space, but also as a means of materializing the cultural frameworks that guide an individual's experience and interpretation of that space. Her approach thus showcases how the garden boundary is more than just an entity for delimitation, and responds to the weakness of the architectural approach discussed

[51] Elomaa (2015): 143.
[52] Elomaa (2015): 144.
[53] See Bergmann (2014), which builds on her earlier work on boundaries and landscape; cf. *ead.* (1991), and (1992).
[54] Bergmann (2014): 247.

above; but it is still limited in that it focuses almost exclusively on one type of medium, the visual arts.

Responding to Past Approaches

In response to the ambiguities presented by Roman garden space (as explored in chaper one), the lack of intermedial analysis, and the under-explored potential significance of its boundaries, this thesis thus seeks to interrogate the notion of 'the boundary' as an essential characteristic of the Roman garden, and to explore the perception of garden space in relation to its limits. Using case studies from both literature and material and visual culture, my study will examine the status of different individual garden sites by posing questions such as: how does the notion of a boundary translate across real, represented, and textual forms? What purpose do boundaries serve in each example? Why are they constructed in the way they are? And how do they affect the relationship between not only the garden and the 'not-garden', but also the garden and the visitor, or the garden and the viewer?

My chosen case studies are formulated as three sets of comparative pairs, each representing a different 'type' of garden from one of the three broader categories of garden space of the Late Republican/Early Empire period we identified in chapter one – utilitarian, sacred, and ornamental. In chapter three, I will examine the 'original' Roman garden (the *hortus*) and its relationship to the agricultural network it belongs to through an analysis of two literary treatments of the space – Virgil's *Georgics* 4.116-148 and the preface to Columella Book 10. In particular, I will consider whether the garden's bounded status constitutes an actual separation from the rest of the agricultural world it is situated within; and I will explore the ways in which both poets articulate the ambiguous garden-agriculture relationship through the deliberate ways in which they structure and frame their garden texts. Chapter four, meanwhile, will focus on the shared arboreal imagery of the *Ara Pacis* and Livia's Garden Room, reframing the *Ara Pacis* as a sacred grove purposefully constructed as part of an Augustan green landscape. My discussion here will argue that the ways in which boundaries are constructed, represented and contested within the two artistic compositions creates an intersection between garden space and sacred space, an intersection that, in turn, reflects the ideological structures promoted as part of the Augustan regime. Finally, in chapter five, I will explore the garden spaces and paintings of Villa A at Oplontis in conjunction with the description of ornamental villa gardens in Pliny the Younger's letters 2.17 and 5.6. My analysis in this chapter will examine the extent to which the Romans regarded ornamental villa gardens as objects of artificially constructed viewpoints; and I will demonstrate how the

garden boundary operates as a porous membrane within the villa that challenges our sense of perspective and mediates between a series of oppositions.

My case study analysis will, therefore, not only shed light on familiar objects and texts from the fresh perspective of garden space, but it will also expand current scholarship on more traditionally-accepted Roman garden spaces through its focus on boundaries. As such, it builds on the more complex and nuanced approaches to garden space, as seen in the scholarship of Pagán, Bergmann, Elomaa, and Von Stackelberg, but also responds to their weaknesses by concentrating specifically on boundaries *and* maintaining an intermedial focus. Furthermore, by exploring the status of these six different gardens as they relate to, or are framed by, their individual contexts, my approach moves away from the tendency of previous scholars to 'consider objects, texts, and sites in isolation from the networks in which they exist and which they help constitute'.[55]

My examination also seeks to avoid one of the main difficulties of intermedial analysis. When attempting to incorporate different media under one large umbrella of 'garden space', it is all too tempting to try and unearth the 'true essence' of all the individual places. Logically, we want to find a meeting point between the different types of evidence and question what it is that brings them all together; and, indeed, my analysis in chapter one suggests that 'the boundary' is one essential characteristic that we can attach to all gardens. However, as we examine the individual case studies, it will become clear that what is important is not so much a matter of what the different gardens may have in common — in that they have a form of boundary — but, rather, how we use that notion of a boundary as a specific standpoint from which to analyse them;[56] and I will demonstrate that what is significant is not so much the boundary itself, but, rather, the delight in playing with that sense of boundedness and separation. In this way, I will showcase how the differences between the types of information provided by each source can be equally as important as their similarities.[57]

This rejection, then, of an 'either/or' mentality when it comes to analysing sources from both literature and material culture aligns my approach with the tripartite framework of Soja's Thirdspace, as used by Von Stackelberg, wherein the 'true essence' of garden space

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[55] Scott (2013): 8.
[56] Cf. Wittgenstein's (1953) notion of 'family resemblances'. Using games as a paradigmatic example, Wittgenstein demonstrates how things that can be thoughts of as connected by just one essential common feature may in fact be connected by a series of overlapping similarities, with no single feature being common to all things.
[57] Allison (2001), 199, meanwhile, argues that it is not a case of 'either/or' when it comes to material and literary sources since 'each can inform on the ideological and practical use of space, and the differences between the types of information are as important as the similarities'.

exists in a space *between* the material and the representational.[58] The shift away from an insistence on traditional binary oppositions, a central tenet of Thirdspace, also points to the heart of my own argument. Although the Romans of the Late Republic and Early Empire regularly defined their gardens through the use of a boundary, suggesting a clear sense of division between binaries, I will showcase how they actually constructed such boundaries specifically to open up the division between not just garden and not-garden, but also a number of other oppositions (such as inside/outside, practical/aesthetic, sacred/profane, real/imagined). The traditional binaries still exist, the underlying structures are still there, but my analysis will demonstrate how they are consistently undermined, re-worked, or played with. Thus, by rejecting a strictly dialectic approach to the space, in which all oppositions create contestations, my alignment with a tripartite framework will allow the so-called oppositions on display within the garden to 'operate *around* each other in a less direct way'; [59] and, although the gardens studied in my analysis may be presented as bounded or set aside, they also remain transitional and permeable.

In my adherence to a Thirdspace-type framework, my approach also recognises the garden's status as a heterotopic site. However, rather than following Von Stackelberg and Pagán's focus on Roman gardens as examples of 'heterotopias of deviation', I am most concerned with the 'relational disruption between space and time' that forms part of the heterotopic discourse, and how this can help us understand and analyse the construction, and potential deconstruction, of the boundaries of space and time within each of my garden settings.[60] As detailed above, according to Foucault's fourth principle, a heterotopia is a space often linked to time – they are 'heterochronias' that 'function at full capacity' when we arrive at 'an absolute break' with 'traditional' time.[61] A good example of the 'temporal discontinuities' of heterotopia, as explored by Beth Lord, is the museum.[62] Foucault suggests that the museum is a heterotopia because it brings together disparate objects from different times in a single space that attempts to enclose the totality of time, a totality that is itself protected from time's erosion.[63] Thus, according to Lord, the museum engages in a double paradox:[64]

> *[the museum] contains infinite time in a finite space, and it is both a space of time and a 'timeless' space. What makes it a heterotopia, then, appears to be*

[58] See n. 27, 28, 29, above.
[59] Fitzgerald and Spentzou (2018): 10, emphasis my own.
[60] Johnson (2006): 78. Cf. Defert (1997), 275, who refers to heterotopias as 'spatio-temporal units'.
[61] Foucault (1986): 26.
[62] Lord (2006), esp. 3-6. The phrase 'temporal discontinuities' (*decoupages du temps*) was put forward by Foucault (1998): 182.
[63] Foucault (1998): 175-85.
[64] Lord (2006): 3-4.

> *threefold: its juxtaposition of temporally discontinuous objects, its attempts to present the totality of time, and its isolation, as an entire space, from normal temporal continuity.*

It is in this same context that I will consider my chosen Roman garden sites. Each of the garden sites I explore engages with a combination of different, and potentially conflicting, temporal frameworks, and it is often the way in which these frameworks work in conjunction with one another that leads to the garden's specific and unique identity.

In chapter three, for example, I explore how the temporal structures at play in Virgil's garden *excursus* are able to inform us on the connection between garden space and the agricultural network it is situated within; and I will demonstrate how the inclusion of opposing and alternative dimensions of time within the passage is a direct reflection of two different, yet simultaneous, relationships between gardens and agriculture. Similarly, in chapter four, I reflect on how the representations of garden space on the *Ara Pacis* and within Livia's Garden Room demonstrate a resistance to conventional temporal structures (for example, in the suspension of regular seasonal growth and decay); how this resistance creates an intersection between garden space and sacred space; and how this intersection, in turn, becomes a key part of the construction of an 'Augustan' landscape.

The disruption of time within heterotopic space, as demonstrated by the example of the museum, is also often matched by the disruption of space itself; and Foucault's example of the mirror illustrates this explicitly. Although the mirror itself is a 'placeless place', it is also an actual site that disrupts our spatial position – 'the space occupied is at the same time completely real and unreal, forming an utter dislocation of place'.[65] Indeed, the positioning of the heterotopia at the intersection of theoretical axes of imaginary/real and normal/other effectively renders it a mirroring space imbued with inversionary possibilities.[66] Foucault sees heterotopia as 'counter-sites' in which 'all the other real sites that can be found within culture are simultaneously represented, contested and inverted';[67] and this mirroring or inversionary function is then complemented by the overarching ambivalence of heterotopia where boundaries and binary thinking are held in 'productive suspension'.[68]

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[65] Johnson (2006): 80; cf. Foucault (1998): 179.
[66] Dehaene and De Cauter (2008): 25.
[67] Foucault (1986): 24. The word translated as 'site' here is the French *emplacement*, a term that has a sense of both 'space' and 'place'. Dehaene and De Cauter (2008) believe that Foucault uses the word *emplacement* to give it a technical sense, rather than using 'common' terms such as *place, lieu, endroit*, etc. Confusingly, Miskowiec's translation loses this original emphasis by using the English 'site' for *emplacement* and 'emplacement' for *la localization*.
[68] Johnson (2006): 80.

My case study analysis will thus demonstrate that the garden, as both a physical artefact and a palimpsest of multiple other dimensions, has the potential to become such a space of illusion – a heterotopic placeless place – that 'utilises literal and metaphorical constructs' in order to 'contest binaries of space and time'.[69] In fact, the dislocation of space will be a key feature across the individual garden sites, as we will be repeatedly forced to question exactly where we are in relation to the garden space. This is particularly the case in chapter five, where I explore the garden spaces of luxury villas, both in the material remains of Villa A at Oplontis and through the eyes of Pliny the Younger in his villa letters (2.17 and 5.6). At Oplontis, for example, it becomes clear that the boundaries of the garden spaces are carefully constructed in such a way that they constantly challenge our sense of perspective and realign our focus again and again; and we are thus left unable to make a clear division between what is 'inside' or 'outside' any particular garden space. Such a 'diffusion of perspective' also pervades Pliny's letters, with attempts to reconstruct the 'plan' of his villas proving fruitless.[70] As we approach each of my chosen garden sites, we must be aware of how supposed binaries (such as inside/outside) are simultaneously constructed and contested, and how the resulting dislocation of time and space impacts our perception of that particular site and, also, potentially, other garden sites.

Garden Boundary – or Frame?

In this way, my analysis across these chapters will move beyond a reading of garden boundaries as simply policing access and control, and I will demonstrate how conceiving of a garden boundary as purely an act of spatial division limits our understanding of what a garden boundary is and how it functions. More specifically, through the exploration of my six chosen case studies, I will propose that seeing the garden boundary as a 'frame' is a useful way of opening up possibilities of interpretation for how the garden boundary 'works' and our understanding of garden space more generally.[71]

In order to do this, we must, of course, consider some basic definitions of 'boundary' and 'frame'. According to the Oxford English Dictionary, a 'boundary' is a 'line which marks the limit of an area, a *dividing* line'; and, similarly, Merriam-Webster describes it as

[69] This is also the approach taken by Nakaue (2008), esp. 67, in her examination of the garden installations of *De Sandmann* and *Tooba*.
[70] I borrow this phrase 'diffusion of perspective' in this context from Von Stackelberg (2009), 132.
[71] Von Stackelberg (2009), 70, does note that framing is a 'key feature' of Roman gardens, 'focusing not only on the gaze, but also the imagination on a directed view'. However, unlike her use of access analysis, she does not develop the idea of framing in any thorough way.

'something that indicates or *fixes* a limit or extent'.[72] Both of these definitions focus on the boundary as a finite limit, with the indication that it is not penetrable, and this, of course, supports the reading of the garden boundary as akin to an architectural boundary, as detailed above. A 'frame', however, according to the Oxford English Dictionary, can be 'a rigid structure that surrounds something', 'a basic structure that underlies or supports a system, a concept, or a text', or 'an underlying conceptual structure'; or, according to the Collins Dictionary, it can be 'an open structure that gives shape and support to something', 'a border into which something is fitted', or 'the system around which something is built'. In comparison to the definitions of 'boundary', which emphasise demarcation and division, a 'frame' is understood more in terms of providing structure and support. Furthermore, the notion of a frame also takes on the potential for increased ideological significance, with both definitions pointing to the fact that a frame can be a set of ideas or facts, or a way of thinking – a frame is still predominantly a physical entity, but it also has conceptual implications.

Platt and Squire have articulated this subtle but crucial difference between the two concepts in their recent volume on framing in classical art;[73] and, although the authors are discussing the frame here in the specific context of art theory, there are useful parallels we can draw between the ways in which they discuss frames and the way in which we will see garden boundaries operating across my case studies.[74] Here, the authors state that 'at the most fundamental level, frames serve to articulate boundaries' – like a boundary, frames zone or delimit the field of representation, and, therefore, define the physical and conceptual space of that representation.[75] Frames, however, also 'order the space of an image', categorising that space internally, and thus loading the field of view with 'different ideas about how it should be seen and understood'.[76] This reading of 'the frame' should be understood in the context of Derrida's dismantling of the Kantian *parergon*, as explored in his work *The Truth in Painting*

[72] The emphasis here is my own.
[73] Platt and Squire (2017). For a discussion and thorough bibliography on 'what do frames do?' in the context of classical art, see *ibid*. 8-84, where the authors respond to this question under seven subheadings: 'the frames of taxonomy'; 'delineating the visual field'; 'categorising space'; 'ideologies of signification'; 'ill-detachable detachments'; 'the self-aware frame'; and 'framing contexts'.
[74] Interestingly, some scholars have stressed a connection between 'art' and 'garden space'. Jones (2016), esp. 25-74, for example, in his monograph on the boundaries of art and social space, analyses the extent to which the garden and garden paintings can be categorised as 'art'; and he invites us to think about the Roman *domus* as a sort of themed art assemblage in its own right, with the garden and garden paintings participating in a shared cultural language between artifacts, designed to project a metaphorical portrait of its owner. Kearns (2013), 151, meanwhile, argues that gardens can be 'inherently pictorial' as they 'frame specific, constructed, projections of nature, a nature that has been appropriated for human needs and desires'. Cf. Cosgrove and Daniels (1988), 1, on landscape as 'a cultural image, a pictorial way of representing, structuring, or symbolising surroundings'.
[75] Platt and Squire (2017): 12-13.
[76] Platt and Squire (2017): 32.

(*La vérité en peinture*).[77] For Derrida, the *parergon* should not be understood in hierarchical terms as a subservient or secondary category. Instead, he defines it as neither work (*ergon*) nor outside the work (*hors d'oeuvre*), neither inside nor outside, a frame that stands out against two grounds but, with respect to each these grounds, merges in to one another;[78] and, as such, it follows that frames 'do not just circumscribe their contents, but actively mediate' between the so-called inside and outside as 'permeable sites of communications' that 'establish the conditions according to which the work is experienced'.[79] Like a frame to a piece of art, then, the garden boundary, at its most basic level, marks out a space; but, in doing so, it also loads that space with potential meanings. As previously noted in chapter one, to create a garden is not just to set a space apart, but also it is to cultivate that space to the point that it represents something 'different', something 'other' compared to its surroundings; and, yet, it also remains intimately connected to those surroundings in the way it mediates between traditional binaries positioned either side of its dividing line.

Understanding the garden boundary in this same way, then, underscores many aspects of my case study analysis. I do not claim that the concepts of 'boundary' and 'frame' are mutually exclusive, but, rather, I hope to demonstrate that including 'framing' in our thinking about gardens provides a useful analytical tool to examine particular garden sites. In chapter three, for example, my analysis of Virgil and Columella's passages focuses on the ways in which the two poets articulate the garden's *parergonal*, or supplementary, status in relation to agriculture through the deliberate construction of their garden texts, which simultaneously reaffirms and also undermines the garden's supposed lowly status in the hierarchy of agricultural spaces. For Virgil and Columella, the framing practices they utilise within their texts are thus themselves 'culturally framed', and their categorisations are 'bound within ideological frameworks'.[80] As we shall see, this is not just about drawing a simple dividing line between garden space and agricultural space, but, rather, articulating a set of cultural perceptions through the structural set-up of the texts.

This notion of 'cultural framing' is also brought to the forefront of my discussion in chapter four, where I analyse the shared arboreal imagery of two garden-inspired artistic displays – the floral friezes of the *Ara Pacis*, and Livia's Garden Room. Here, my discussion

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[77] Derrida (1987), esp. 15-147, responding to the Kantian notion of aesthetics, as expressed in the *Critique of Judgement* (*Kritik der Urtheilskraft*), first published in 1790 and revised in 1793 and 1799. Most notably, in key passage from the later two editions, Kant argues that ornaments (*Zieraten*) are said to be subservient, 'parergonal' adjuncts to the central artistic *ergon*. For an introduction to Kantian aesthetics in the interpretation of ancient materials, see Platt and Squire (2017), 39, n.71; and Squire (2018), 17-20.
[78] Marriner (2002): 351.
[79] Platt and Squire (2017): 49. Cf. *ibid.* 47-59, esp. n.89, and Squire (2018), 16, n.36, for a summary of Derrida's approach and relevant bibliography, particularly in relation to the ancient materials.
[80] Platt and Squire (2017): 38.

argues that the way in which boundaries are constructed, represented, and contested within the two compositions is a direct reflection of the ideological principles promoted by the Augustan regime. Their shared characteristics of hyperfertile abundance and contained profusion reveal a complex balancing act, or perhaps even a deliberate collision, of supposed antithesis, with two types of co-existing temporal frameworks (calendrical and eternal) bound together in spaces that negotiate the boundary between discipline and excess. In this way, the two compositions amount to 'tangible reifications of a host of less overt social practices and expectations' – in this instance, the creation of a new Augustan green cityscape as an organic monument representative of the Golden Age.[81]

Thus, both the floral friezes of the *Ara Pacis* and Livia's Garden Room showcase how acts of framing can 'throw into relief…political and cultural factors' and 'make visible the large organisational principles governing visual display'.[82] Furthermore, I will also demonstrate how the structural principles embedded in the representation of boundaries in these two examples also extends to the organisation of the spaces themselves: we should not just view these images statically, but, rather, understand them as part of carefully constructed physical and spatial relationships that also rely on the negotiation of various boundaries. By analysing the formal framing strategies of the two garden compositions, I will therefore be able to parse the 'complex, ever-shifting and ideological manoeuvres' that inform 'the creation, display, and reception' of both artefacts.[83]

Thinking about the garden boundary in terms of framing – and its connection to art theory – is also useful because it naturally emphasises the *representational* aspect of gardens and the importance of the gaze or view in establishing and conceptualising these spaces (something that the 'architectural' approach to boundaries, as detailed above, lacked).[84] My final chapter, then, will question the extent to which the Romans regarded ornamental villa gardens as artificially constructed viewpoints through its exploration of the villa spaces represented in Pliny's letters and those that feature in the remains of Villa A at Oplontis. Here, I will demonstrate how both Pliny and the designers of Villa A were guided by a central

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[81] Platt and Squire (2017): 74.
[82] Platt and Squire (2017): 75.
[83] Platt and Squire (2017): 76. On the concept of 'framing' as an alternative to mere 'context', see Bal (2002), esp. 134-7. It is in this same vein that the contributors to Platt and Squire's volume focus on the 'relationship between material frames and the cultural interventions that frame all representation'; and the ways in which 'the structural means by which images are contained entail myriad ways of conceptualising the dynamic relationships that bind objects to their environments', thus bypassing the 'oversimplifications that notions of inert 'context' can imply' (p.6).
[84] However, we must be careful not to think of garden space exclusively as a 'view', even if it appears that way. Cf. Malpas (2011), on the 'problem of landscape', who argues that, if we only focus on its 'representational' or 'spectatorial' character, landscape will be inadequately understood as merely a 'view'; and Ingold (2000), 191, who argues for landscape as, not just a pictorial image, but an 'embodiment of a set of dynamic elements and interactions'.

desire to partition the natural world into a series of perfectly framed vistas; and yet, despite an insistence on the apparent proliferation of framing devices, the boundaries set up do not operate as finite divisions, but, rather, as porous membranes that mediate between a series of oppositions (namely, architecture/horticulture, inside/outside, *ars*/*natura*). This blurring of boundaries creates a situation where the garden boundary seems to draw attention to itself, whilst also deconstructing itself, to the point where the 'garden' element can simultaneously be framed space and the frame itself.

As Part One ("Setting the Framework") of this thesis draws to a close, it is clear that boundaries have a significant role to play in the Roman conception of garden space during the Late Republic and Early Empire. In the opening two chapters, I have demonstrated how, theoretically, we may define the garden as a 'bounded' space; but that this notion of boundedness hides a more complex and flexible set of categorisations, and also opens up the conversation regarding traditional binaries, such as inside and outside. Furthermore, having reflected on previous approaches to Roman gardens, I have demonstrated that there is clear potential for furthering our understanding of individual garden sites by combining critical and nuanced analysis of their boundaries with an overall theoretical framework that allows intermedial analysis at the level of space.

To begin this type of analysis, then, chapter three will showcase my first pair of case studies – Virgil *Georgics* 4.116-148 and Columella Book 10 – both of which focus on the the Roman garden as *hortus*. As examples of this 'original' garden type, these two texts provide the perfect starting point for my examination of garden space, and will enable me to establish an important foundational understanding of the Roman conception of garden space. In chapter one, I noted how the *hortus* was often located as part of a broader agricultural network; and yet, I also highlighted the flexibility in terminology between *hortus, heredium*, and *villa*, and how the *hortus* was considered part of the farm in some legal texts, but not part of the farm in others.[85] So, if Virgil and Columella position their garden passages within agricultural texts, does this mean they simply view the *hortus* as being 'inside' agriculture? Or do they categorise it in contrast to agriculture, and therefore 'outside' its remit? Or does the *hortus* sit neither inside nor outside of the agricultural world, but represent something different altogether? It is with these questions in mind that I now turn to Part Two ("Case Study Analysis").

[85] Cf. n. 46 and 47, chpt.1.

Part Two: Case Study Analysis

Chapter Three

Virgil, Columella, and *Hortus* Poetry

> *A garden should make you feel you've entered privileged space – a place not just set apart but reverberant – and it seems to me that, to achieve this, the gardener must put some kind of twist on the existing landscape, turn its prose into something nearer poetry.*[1]

Like so many 'natural' spaces of the ancient Roman world, the gardens described in the agricultural treatises of Virgil and Columella do not exist for us to visit. The garden as a place may well occupy two spatial categories — the physical space inhabited by the actual garden site ('Firstspace'), and the representational space of painting or literature ('Secondspace')[2] — but, in the absence of material evidence, it is often the latter representational evidence, already an interpretation of the artist or poet, that emerges as our first point of entry into the garden. This is especially the case when it comes to the traditional kitchen garden, the *hortus*, which we perceive today almost entirely from a literary perspective.

The aim of this chapter, then, is to unpack the representation of the *hortus,* as described by Virgil and Columella, in order to further explore the Roman understanding of garden space.[3] Although I am concerned with how each author describes their *hortus*, my primary focus is to consider how the garden *as text* is situated within each work as whole: do Virgil and Columella situate their gardens in a similar way to each other? Does the placement of the garden text reflect how gardens are spatially situated in reality? And what are the implications of viewing garden texts in the same way as physical garden spaces?

In order to explore the issues raised by these questions, this chapter will be structured into two main sections. Part one will focus on Virgil's garden *excursus* at *Georgics* 4.116-148, and the temporal structures at play in the passage, in order to demonstrate how the space-time framework put in place by the poet is symptomatic of the garden's problematic relationship to agriculture. Building on the implications of part one, part two will then continue to explore the relationship between garden space and the broader agricultural network it is positioned within by examining the status of Columella's garden verse book within the context of his own agricultural treatise and in relation to Virgil's earlier work.

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[1] Pollan (1991): 244.
[2] Von Stackelberg (2009): 9.
[3] Cf. Pagán (2006), 5-6, who notes that pictures of gardens given by poets generate and deploy a set of expectations about the viewing and experience of the garden proper – an analysis of the gardens in Roman literature thus allows us to see how gardens shaped the thoughts of the authors who wrote about them.

Through an analysis of the prose preface to Book 10 of *De Re Rustica* as a 'paratext' to the verse book proper, I will question the impact of this framing strategy on our perception of both the garden-as-text and garden space itself. Finally, in order to articulate the paradoxical garden-agriculture relationship first introduced by Virgil, and further developed by Columella, I will introduce Derrida's concept of the supplement as a critical concept through which we can begin to unpack and understand these representations of the *hortus*.

Part One: Who has the time? Cultivating the garden space in Virgil, *Georgics* 4.116-148

Atque equidem, extremo ni iam sub fine laborum
vela traham et terris festinem advertere proram,
forsitan et, pinguis hortos quae cura colendi
ornaret, canerem, biferique rosaria Paesti,
quoque modo potis gauderent intiba rivis
et virides apio ripae, tortusque per herbam
cresceret in ventrem cucumis; nec sera comantem
narcissum aut flexi tacuissem vimen acanthi
pallentisque hederas et amantes litora myrtos.
Namque sub Oebaliae memini me turribus arcis,
qua niger umectat flaventia culta Galaesus,
Corycium vidisse senem, cui pauca relicti
iugera ruris erant, nec fertilis illa iuvencis
nec pecori opportuna seges nec commoda Baccho.
Hic rarum tamen in dumis olus albaque circum
lilia verbenasque premens vescumque papaver
regum aequabat opes animis, seraque revertens
nocte domum dapibus mensas onerabat inemptis.
Primus vere rosam atque autumno carpere poma,
et cum tristis hiems etiamnum frigore saxa
rumperet et glacie cursus frenaret aquarum,
ille comam mollis iam tondebat hyacinthi
aestatem increpitans seram Zephyrosque morantis.
Ergo apibus fetis idem atque examine multo
primus abundare et spumantia cogere pressis
mella favis; illi tiliae atque uberrima tinus,
quotque in flore novo pomis se fertilis arbos

induerat, totidem autumno matura tenebat.
Ille etiam seras in versum distulit ulmos
eduramque pirum et spinos iam pruna ferentis
iamque ministrantem platanum potantibus umbras.
Verum haec ipse equidem spatiis exclusus iniquis
praetereo atque aliis post me memoranda relinquo.

> And maybe, for my own part, if my labours were not near their end, and if I were not drawing in my sails and steering my prow in haste to land, I would sing of how to tend lush gardens to make them beautiful, and of the twice-flowering rose beds of Paestum, and of how the endive rejoices in watery banks while verdant banks rejoice in wild celery, and of how the gourd, snaking through the grass, swells into paunch; nor would I be silent about late-flowering narcissus, or the willowy acanthus, pallid ivy, or myrtle, which adore to be near water. For I remember once, beneath the walls of hill-top Tarentum, where black Galaesus waters golden crops, I saw an old Cilician, who had a little plot of land, not rich enough for cattle, no use for sheep, unsuitable for vines. Yet here he dotted cabbage-plants among the brambles, with white lilies and verbena and slender poppies in between. To his mind, such wealth was equal to a king's; and when he came home late at night, he piled his table high with unbought feasts. He was the first in spring to pick the roses, and in autumn fruit, and, when bitter winter still made rocks explode with cold and rivers' flow was frozen up with ice, there he was already trimming dainty hyacinths' locks, and cursing summer and its zephyrs for being late in coming. Yes, he was first to overflow with families of bees and bounteous swarms and force the spurting liquid from squeezed honeycombs. His lime trees and his pines were all abundant, and all the fruit these fertile trees gave promise of from early blossom came to ripeness in the autumn. Elms he planted out, full-grown, in lines, along with hardy pear, thorn trees full of plums, and planes already serving shade to drinking parties. All this I pass by with regret, shut out by space's unfair constraints, and leave for others after me to recollect.[4]

When Virgil recounts his memory of the Old Corycian in his Tarentum garden, he frames his brief *excursus* explicitly in terms of two factors: space and time. He *would* sing of how to tend gardens if his labours were not near the end (*extremo ni iam sub fine laborum*, 116); but he must pass the subject by, shut out by space's unfair constraints (*spatiis exclusus iniquis*, 147),

[4] Virg. *G.* 116-148, transl. Gowers (2000), adapted.

leaving the subject matter for later poets to discuss (*aliis post me memoranda relinquo*, 148). We, as readers, must be content with the story of the old man.

Virgil's preoccupation with time in this passage is hardly surprising. Gardening is inherently a temporal activity due to its necessary engagement with cycles of maintenance and change occurring at daily, seasonal, or annual rates. The concept of time, however, is notoriously difficult to define and intimately connected with the society that experiences it – although the progression of time from past to present to future may seem natural, societies rarely fashion their experience of time in linear form.[5] As for the garden specifically, Mara Miller's discussion highlights how gardens are always experienced first in 'real time', that is, time as it is moved through physically and coordinated socially; but that they also thematise time by bringing together into the same framework things that 'take place' on completely different timescales.[6] All the various cycles of time represented in the garden, therefore, and their implied contrast with the linear progression of human life, are available to be juxtaposed and contrasted for effect. This, in turn, is important for our understanding of Virgil's garden text, since how he chooses to represent time can provide key implications of how he also understands the cultural meaning of the garden.[7]

So, what does Virgil's representation of time tell us about the cultural perception of the Roman *hortus*? And, more importantly, why does he align his concerns over time with issues of space? In this, part one, I will consider the representation of time in *Georgics* 4.116-148 through an examination of three key elements of the narrative: 1) Virgil's awareness of the timely nature of his poetic task; 2) the significance of the *senex Corycius*; and 3) the cycles of activity associated with the garden space. This examination will demonstrate how the alternative versions of time represented in the garden text is a symptom of the way the garden is perceived as a space within an agricultural world. The distinctive and unique space-time framework that Virgil creates around his texts points to a relationship between gardens and agriculture; but, as we shall see, the nature of this relationship appears to oscillate between potentially conflicting interpretations.

Why Virgil, *Georgics* 4.116-148?

[5] See Pagán (2006), 15, where the author notes the following examples: 'In a political revolution, the future takes precedence over all other time. Actions performed in the past are condemned for hindering the future, while actions performed in the present have value only if they contribute to the formation of the new state. In a patriarchal society, the past takes precedence over all other time. Nothing in the present compares to the value of the past, when things were better, stronger, and more effective. The best future is the one that replicates the past.'
[6] Miller (1993): 40.
[7] Cf. Pagán (2006): 16.

Before we delve deeper into Virgil, though, it is important to cover some general context in order to understand exactly what sort of space he is talking about and why this particular passage is so important for understanding the conceptual frameworks guiding the descriptions of garden space. As discussed in chapter one, there were many different types of spaces in the ancient world that fall under the category of 'gardens'. Here, in the *Georgics*, a didactic poem on agricultural practice that is 'unashamedly and systematically technical', the garden described by Virgil falls into the sub-category of the *hortus* – the traditional vegetable or kitchen garden - a paradigm of ancient rusticity governed primarily by practical needs and the requirement of *labor*.[8]

On the surface, the inclusion of a rustic, practical garden seems like a natural fit within a similarly rustic and practical agricultural world – and this is reflected in the writings of earlier agricultural writers, such as Cato and Varro, who name the *hortus* as one of the subdivisions of the farm estate.[9] Interpreters, however, have been consistently intrigued and challenged by Virgil's garden passage because, rather than a full description of a garden, it is merely a short account of the poet's personal memory (*memini…vidisse*, 125/7) of an old man (*Corycium senem,* 127) tending his plot – an *excursus* that interrupts a set of instructions concerning bee keeping. As Harrison rightly asks, can any specific function be attached to this digressive narrative about a mysterious and unnamed old man?[10]

Understandably, in response to such a broad question, a considerable literature has arisen concerning the stand out nature of the gardening passage. After all, Virgil could have easily incorporated a more in-depth discussion of gardens into his discussion on bees:[11] at *G.* 4.109, he mentions the bees' need for a garden (*invitent croceis halantes floribus horti)*, and *G.* 4.139-41 describes the old man tending his bees (*ergo apibus fetis idem atque examine multo/ primus abundare et spumantia cogere pressis/ mella favis*). Instead, though, he

[8] This description of the *Georgics* is from Toohey (1996), 10. 'Didactic' (from διδάσκειν) can be broadly described as 'poetry that teaches'. Gale (2005), 101-2, notes that the genre is primarily defined 'from its subject matter…usually technical or philosophical in nature'; cf. Volk (2002), 2-3, who states that didactic poems generally have the following features – first person narration (usually the poet), self-referential metapoetic reflection, and instruction in a particular *res* or subject. Nelis (2004), 79-80, in addition, argues that didactic poems often emphasize attaining happiness or success through diligence in a specialized task. On the *hortus*, cf. n. 38 and 39 in chpt.1.

[9] Cato, *Agr.* 1.7; Var. *R.* 1.7.10.

[10] Harrison (2004): 109.

[11] For a summary of scholarship on the link between bees and the garden/gardener in Virgil's passage, see Clay (1981). Note in particular p. 58, where Clay discusses her own belief in the bees and gardener as mutually dependent for the meaning of the passage: 'failure to understand the function of the old gardener who forms the core of the excursus entails a failure to understand the meaning of the bees'.

changes the location and time of the episode completely, making the garden setting doubly remote.[12]

The garden passage, then, is 'pointedly detached' from its surroundings through a number of devices, which, together, suggest that Virgil went 'to great lengths' to set off the old man from his main theme and 'label it an *excursus*'.[13] First, the passage itself is cast in the form of a *praeteritio*, the device that purports to minimise but in fact creates emphasis – lines 116-119 are presented as a contrary-to-fact conditional, to which lines 147-8 provide the closing frame. Second, *namque* is used at line 125, the beginning of the garden description proper, to indicate that what will follow is an independent episode.[14] Finally, it is during the description of the old man that Virgil reaches an almost 'unparalleled intensity of involvement',[15] since this is the only part of the *Georgics* framed as the poet's own 'personal reminiscence'.[16] Although this personal touch certainly adds intimacy to the description, it also forms the crux of Virgil's apparent strategy to throw his gardening episode into relief, and the stark contrast to the surrounding text invites us to question the *excursus*' meaning far more than if it had been seamlessly integrated into the broader narrative on bees. Furthermore, by framing the passage in terms of memory, Virgil 'creates an effect whereby we almost struggle with him to conjure the details'.[17] Questions remain as to what function or meaning can be attached to this digressive narrative – perhaps the garden is not such a natural fit in the agricultural world after all?[18]

The challenges of interpreting the passage are compounded further by our necessary reliance on Virgil as a reference point on Roman gardens. Not only is the pre-Virgilian evidence for gardening extremely limited, but the passage itself is one of very few in Latin

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[12] Cf. Putnam (1979), 251, who, noting the gardener's distance in time and space from the poet, describes the passage as an 'imaginative garden in itself'.
[13] Clay (1981): 57.
[14] Like και γάρ in the Greek. Thomas (1988), 170, points to similar usages of *namque* at *Ecl.* 6.31 (the beginning of Silenus' song); and *A.* 1.466 (the beginning of the ecphrasis on Dido's temple).
[15] Thomas (1992): 44.
[16] Clay (1981): 57. Cf. La Penna (1984), 903, who terms the passage '*con un ricordo personale'*; and Otis (1964), 183-4, who believes it 'reads almost as if Virgil himself had seen and admired the vegetables and hyacinths which grew so lushly in such favorable soil'.
[17] Thomas (1992): 45. Cf. *ibid.* 45-51, where the author argues that the inclusion of *memini* and *memoranda* conveys a strong sense of poetic allusion. On the vocabulary of poetic memory, see Conte (1996).
[18] It is important to note that some commentators abruptly disagree with the notion that gardens are part of the agricultural world. For example, Perkell (1981), 169, states that 'the substance of the passage is intrusive and extraordinary within the genre of the georgic poem since the ancients ordinarily treated gardening quite separately from farming'; cf. Mynors (1990), 273. Compare this approach to n. 9, above. It is my intention to demonstrate that it is not simply a case of 'in' or 'out' when it comes to the garden space's position in relation to agriculture but, rather, that these two complimentary spheres have a complex and oscillating relationship to one another.

literature to represent the garden in its 'original' form of the *hortus*.[19] Virgil's *excursus* thus represents a starting point for the analysis of textual evidence on Roman gardens. It gives us a sense of how the 'original' Roman garden was utilised and positioned, as well as how that was interpreted by one individual; and it also gives us the opportunity to examine a passage on gardens as a relativeyly substantive part of a whole text, rather than just a passing reference. Virgil, intentionally or not, sets the framework for what we are to expect from a garden text, which, in turn, can have an impact on how we view later garden texts and the very space of the garden itself. It is my intention, then, as I move into a closer analysis, to interrogate this framework further through an analysis of the temporal structures employed within the passage.

Virgil's preoccupation with time

Virgil's preoccupation with time is stated from the outset of the passage (116-124). He is nearing the end of his metaphorical journey: approaching the shore (*terris*, 117), he can sense that he is reaching the end of his labours (*extremo…sub fine laborum*, 116);[20] and so he *would* sing (*canerem,* 119) about gardens if he had the time, but he does not. All he has time for is the story of the old man.[21] This lack of time is reiterated at the close of the passage, when Virgil confirms that he must pass the subject by and leave it (*praetereo atque…relinquo*, 148).

[19] In terms of the limited evidence of gardening descriptions pre-Virgil, possible models include the section on gardening in Nicander's fragmentary *Georgica* (eds. A. S. Gow and A. F. Schofield, Cambridge, 1953); and a lost poem by the Hellenistic Philitas. On the relationship between the *Georgics* and the *Georgica*, see Harrison (2004); and on the potential relationship to Philitas, see Thomas (1992). Plin. *Nat.* 19.177 states that his knowledge on gardening is influenced by the work of Sabinus Tiro, who dedicated his book to Maecenas (*auctor est Sabinus Tiro in libro Cepuricon, quem Maecenati dicauit*); and he cites four other works on gardening in the index to Book 19 (Caesennius, Castricius, Firmus, and Potitus). Greek precedents are equally scarce, and we simply are not as well informed about Greek gardens, as we are those of the Romans. There are two gardens in the *Odyssey* – the garden of Alcinous in Book 7 and the garden of Laertes in Book 24 – both of which, although fairly formal and ordered, are still represented as productive. For gardens in ancient Greece, see Gothein (1909); Carroll-Spillecke (1989, 1992a, 1992b); Carroll (2003), 1-30; Giesecke (2007), 35-79. For gardens in Homer specifically, see Ferriolo (1989) and Giesecke (2007), 37-40.

[20] Leigh (1994): 183, notes that, because the passage explicitly features an old man, we are reminded here 'of the ancient equation of life with a voyage and death as a port'. On this metaphor, see e.g. Sen. *Ep.* 70.1-3; and Nisbet and Hubbard (1978) on Hor. *Carm.* 2.10.1.

[21] Thibodeau (2001), 184-5, argues that the 'vanishing opportunity' to discuss gardening is highlighted by the use of and change between different tenses. Virgil, as narrator, presents himself as turning his prow to the shore in the present tense (*trahem…festinem*, 117), which 'allows him to treat as contrafactual a situation in which he has time to spare for other subjects'; but, when it comes to imagining singing about gardens, the time of the song is in the imperfect (*canerem*, 119), and so the time taken to narrate 117-119 is all that it has taken to make that missed chance part of the past. This is further emphasized by the pluperfect subjunctive (*nec…tacuissem*, 122-3), since the hypothetical occasion of 'not being silent' is now set firmly in the past, with no continuation in the future. Mynors (1990), 275, makes a similar point: '*tacuissem* after *canerem* suggests by the change in tense that Virgil's book on gardening becomes increasingly remote as he thinks on it'.

We could, of course interpret this subject in a fairly straightforward way – the time left on his 'journey' (i.e. his poetic task) is limited, and he cannot possibly write about everything within these constraints, so some things will just have to be left out – and such an interpretation is supported by statements elsewhere in the *Georgics*.[22] At *G.* 1.40, for example, as he contemplates the poetic task ahead, Virgil hopes to be granted 'a calm voyage' (*da facilem cursum*). The choice of *cursum* here is noteworthy because it can be used as a metaphor for navigation, but also for chariot racing;[23] and at the close of Books 1 and 2, Virgil uses the metaphor of chariot racing to denote his own work and the poetic journey.[24] At *G.* 2.541-2, for example, he represents the poet as resting his weary horses before setting out on the second half of his journey:[25]

> *sed nos immensum spatiis confecimus aequor,*
> *et iam tempus equum fumantia soluere colla.*
>
> But in our course we have traversed a mighty plain,
> and now it is time to unyoke the necks of our smoking steeds.

Once we enter Book 3, however, there is an indication that Virgil seems to have felt, or at the very least gives the impression that he felt, pressures of time to complete this journey. At *G.* 3.284-5, he says that time is flying away from him and he fears he lingers too long:

> *sed fugit interea, fugit inreparabile tempus,*
> *singula dum capti circumvectamur amore.*
>
> But time meanwhile is flying, flying beyond recall,
> while we, charmed with love of our theme, linger around
> each detail.

The issue of time is reinforced here by the anaphora of *fugit* in the line *sed fugit interea, fugit inreparabile tempus*; and this, in turn, reminds us of Jupiter's speech at *Aeneid* 10.467-8, which combines the *topoi* of the brevity of life with the idea that life, once gone, cannot be recovered:

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[22] Thibodeau (2001): 184, notes that to describe the journey as perilously close to the finish is in fact consistent with the 'intermittent hypochondria' Virgil displays elsewhere in his poetry, e.g. *Ecl.* 4.53-4: *O mihi tum longae maneat pars ultima vitae, spiritus et quantum sat erit tua dicere facta!*/ I pray that the twilight of a long life may be vouchsafed me, and inspiration enough to hymn your deeds!

[23] OLD, *sv. 'cursus'*.

[24] Note the parallel pairings of *spatia/equis* (1.513-4) and *spatiis/equum* (2.541-2) in the final two lines of each book.

[25] This, and other short phrase translations in part one, are all adapted from the standard Loeb editions, unless otherwise stated. On Virgil's poetic *labor*, see Gale (2000), 185-193. On the image of the poet's journey in the chariot of the Muses, see e.g. Pindar *Ol.* 9.81, *Pyth.* 10.65, *Isth.* 8.62; Callim. *Aet.* fr. 1.25-28; Lucr. 6.47; Prop. 2.10.2, 3.1.9-14; Ov. *Am.* 3.15.18.

> *stat sua cuique dies, breve et inreparabile tempus*
> *omnibus est vitae.*
>
> Each has his day appointed: short and irretrievable
> is the span of life for all.

Collectively, these passages suggest that time in the *Georgics* is essentially goal-directed. Virgil has set himself a poetic task, with a set time (and space) attached to it, and anything outside of that task is a distraction or a digression from the end goal.

Why, though, are gardens specifically singled out as a digression? If we look at other agricultural texts, the authors do point to a potential reason as to why, out of all of the topics that could potentially be covered in the *Georgics*, it is the *hortus* that Virgil claims he must bypass. Despite Cato's suggestion that the garden is second in importance in terms of areas of the farm, in the pseudo-Virgilian *Moretum* it is noted that time spent in the garden can only be achieved after all other agricultural work has been completed or, alternatively, during the holidays:[26]

> *si quando vacuum casula pluviaeve tenebant*
> *festave lux, si forte labor cessebat aratri,*
> *horti opus illud erat*.
>
> If ever rain or holiday kept him unoccupied at home,
> if by chance there was respite from ploughing,
> that time was spent in the garden.

This sentiment is actually shared by Cato elsewhere in his own treatise (*Agr.* 2.4):

> *per ferias potuisse fossas veteres tergeri, viam publicam muniri, vepres recidi,*
> *hortum fodiri…*
>
> Remind him also that on feast days old ditches might be cleaned, road works
> done, brambles cut, the garden spaded…

and also Columella (2.21.1, 4):[27]

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[26] *Moretum,* 66-8; cf. Cato *Agr.* 1.7. On the *Moretum,* see e.g. Heinze (1960), Fitzgerald (1996), Kenney (1984), and Ross (1975).

[27] Agricultural writers, in general, also stress that, even when weather is too bad for fieldwork, there is still plenty to do in the homestead: Hes. *Op.* 493-7; Cato *Agr.* 2.2.3, 37.3-4; Var. *R.* 1.36; Virg. *G.* 1.259-67.

> *sed cum tam otii quam negotii rationem reddere maiores nostri censuerunt, nos quoque monendos esse agricolas existimamus, quae feriis facere quaeque non facere debeant…*
>
> *…in horto quicquid holerum causa facias, omne licet.*
>
> But inasmuch as our ancestors saw fit to render an account of their leisure hours as well as of their times of non-leisure, I also believe that farmers should be advised of what they should do on holidays and what they should leave undone…
>
> …Anything you may do in your garden for the good of your vegetables is lawful.

Broadly speaking, then, the passages above suggest that the Romans defined their agricultural activities within a temporal context. This emphasis on time is unsurprising in light of Feeney's introductory comments on the study of the implementation of Caesar's calendar, which are worth quoting in full here:[28]

> *Rome was as highly developed in terms of social and technological organization as a premodern society could possibly be, with an accompanying battery of elaborate calendars, astronomical knowledge, and records and monuments of the past. At the same time, in its lack of clock regulation for synchronizing mass labor and travel, or of particular divisions of daily time beyond the fluctuating hour, it was a society that remained profoundly premodern and preindustrial in terms of the impact of time structures on the individual's lived experience. Further, one may observe without undue romanticizing that even urban Romans were aware of their society's agrarian basis and of the patterns of recurrent life in the country, in a way that few modern city-dwellers are.*

Feeney's observations here point to some key issues pertinent to my study. Firstly, although as a society, they did have intricate devices for measuring time ('clock time'), it appears that the Romans adhered to what modern historians have termed 'task time':[29] within the structure of time, certain activities are defined and available at set times, which in turn leads to patterns

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[28] Feeney (2007): 2. For an introduction to the practical and conceptual issues of time for the Romans, see *ibid*., 7-42, and 138-42. Cf. Laurence and Smith (1995-6), who argue that time as utilised and perceived in ancient Rome does not fit with the characteristics of modern or capitalist time, nor does it display all the ideals of temporality found in traditional societies.

[29] Riggsby (2003), n. 36, states that 'task time' refers to a time scheme that is not about 'time when' but, rather, 'time to' (as in, 'time to reap').

of movement and thus creates a spatial environment.[30] This idea has been explored and examined in specific Roman contexts before. Ray Laurence's study on the space and society in Pompeii examines the activities of the elites within the city to present the temporal logic that structured city space;[31] and, similarly, Riggsby has looked at how space and time work together in Pliny's *Letters* to show the 'routine' of elite *otium*.[32] There have also been several studies on 'ritual time' in the Roman imagination, with a particular focus on the perceived connections between the Roman ritual calendar and the 'traditional' peasant society of archaic Rome.[33]

However, the issue of how to specifically define *agricultural* activities in a temporal context has not attracted the same level of analysis as the ritual calendar, or the world of elite work and leisure;[34] and yet, Feeney's insistence on the Romans' awareness of rural time structures, coupled with the evidence from the aforementioned agricultural texts, does suggest that there was a temporal dimension to the use of space in the agricultural world. We know that agricultural activities, including gardening, are intrinsically linked to time cycles, due to the necessary engagement with seasonal change, but I would argue that the importance of time can also be extended to include how we categorise agricultural space itself, with the time allocated to agricultural tasks reflecting back on how we view the space associated with those tasks.

In this context, the garden, although potentially productive, appears to be viewed as a sideline, an inessential off-shoot maybe, of whatever constitutes the 'essential' agricultural sphere. As the agricultural writers suggest, the time allotted to agricultural task has created a space-time hierarchical framework that leads us to question the garden space's position within the agricultural world – the idea that you should only work on the garden during 'spare' time

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[30] It has been observed by modern historians that the Industrial Revolution altered people's general perceptions from task time to clock time – see e.g. Thompson (1967), Harrison (1986), and Landes (1987) For a summary of the method set out by the Lund school of urban geographers for understanding human activity in both a temporal and spatial context, see Laurence (1994), 122.
[31] Laurence (1994).
[32] Riggsby (2003).
[33] On the issue of 'ritual time', see e.g. Beard (1987), further developed by Laurence and Smith (1995-6). Both of these articles seek to move away from the tendency to link the ritual calendar with the 'imagined life of the poor Italian farmer' and, instead, see ritual time as a way of defining and delineating power.
[34] Spencer (2010), 57-61, is one exception. As part of a broader discussion on landscape and time, the author considers how changes to the Roman calendar impacted the repetitive process of working the land, a process of constancy often used to 'promote the conservative illusion that nothing fundamental has really changed'. In particular, she focuses on Varro's 'synthesis of agriculture, pastoralism, and history' as a demonstration of the tight connection between 'the practicalities of marking time and the consequences of chronological and calendrical choices'. Cf. Laurence (1993), 80, who states that 'nature was well defined by the Roman calendar' and that 'this agricultural calendar was locked into the Roman conception of the historical past'.

suggests that the activity is of low priority and, therefore, can easily be marginalised.[35] This attitude to the garden is then directly reflected in the small allocation of space for (or, alternatively, the short amount of time spent writing on) the topic of gardening within the *Georgics*.[36] Although it is still included in the *Georgics* as an agricultural topic, it is also sub-*Georgic* in that it is not, or perhaps cannot be, treated properly within the space and time constraints that Virgil has imposed on his agricultural task. By claiming that he must bypass the garden, Virgil thus points to two issues: first, he reaffirms the lowly status of the garden within the space-time hierarchy; and, second, he suggests that he does not have the spare time required for gardening, and so to garden 'properly' would be a digression from the correct course of his journey. There is to be no lingering here!

Pliny the Elder's comments on the *hortus* and on Virgil's garden passage also point to this issue of a potential link between time (to write) and the garden's status. Not only does he refer to the *hortus* as a 'poor man's farm' (*hortus ager pauperis erat*, 19.52), but he also notes that the garden as a topic may well be considered 'mundane' (*nec deterrebit rerum humilitas*, 14.7). Furthermore, in reference to his own writing on gardens, he says that 'some gratitude' should be attached to his labour 'on the grounds that Virgil also confessed how difficult (*difficile*) it was to provide small (*parvis*) matters with dignified appellations (*verborum honorem*).[37] He then goes on to state that, in the garden topics Virgil chose *not* to shun, the *Georgics* demonstrates only the 'choicest of flowers (*et in his quae rettulit flores modo rerum decerpsisse*, 14.7).[38] So what does it say when the 'choicest of flowers' is the story of the old

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[35] Of interest here is Casey (1993), 9-13, on time as 'placial'. This approach states that everything in existence has a 'place' and the 'place-world' exists in time as perceived by humans. In particular, many of the descriptive words we use in reference to time are spatial in character: for example, when we talk about 'before' and 'after' in time, we are involving a spatial distinction of 'in front' and 'behind'; or, when we reference 'long' or 'short' amounts of time, we first understand the sense of 'long' or 'short' themselves from our experience of more or less extended or compressed places.

[36] Cf. Gowers (2000), 129, on the garden as marginal: 'A closer look at the framework of this passage…suggests that its meagre allocation of space is determined partly by the humble status of kitchen-gardens in contemporary Rome. That is to say, the place of the 'garden' within Virgil's larger 'plot' corresponds to the marginal place of the kitchen-garden on the edges of other kinds of organized cultivation, both agricultural and horticultural'. Von Stackelberg (2009), 53, also argues that both Virgil and Columella emphasise the *hortus* as a product of restricted space and limited time, something created 'on the margins of normal agricultural space' to be accommodated 'wherever room is left over'.

[37] Plin. *Nat.* 19.59: *...et contingat aliqua gratia operae curaeque nostrae Vergilio quoque confesso, quam sit difficile verborum honerem tam parvis perhibere*.
Pliny's words here are actually a play on Virg. *G.* 3.289-90 (*nec sum animi dubius verbis ea vincere magnum quam sit et angustis hunc addere rebus honorem*/ And I know it is hard to win with words a triumph, and thus to crown a lowly theme with glory); itself a play on a well-established trope in didactic poetry, cf. Lucr. *DRN* 1.135-7, 5.97-9, 5.735.

[38] The imagery of flowers as literature used here by Pliny is not unusual. The weaving of garlands is a common metaphor for the creation of poems or poetry books, with the term 'anthology' deriving directly from the Greek words for 'flower' (ἄνθος) and 'to gather' (λέγειν). Of particular note is Meleager's proem to the *Stephanus* (*Anth. Gr.* 4.1), where he gives a long list of authors included in his collection, equating each one with a flower or plant, before picturing their poems with his own as being woven into a garland.

man? How does this relate to our space-time framework? It is time now to turn to the figure of the *senex Corycius*.

The significance of the old man

One of the very first things we learn about the man in his garden is that he is old (*memini…Corycium videsse* ***senem***, 125-7). Like Virgil, this figure is also sailing towards the end of his journey, in this instance, the journey of his life.[39] It is not unusual to find a portrayal of an old man tending to his garden;[40] and Virgil certainly reinforces the issue of the man's age by locating him in Tarentum, a place synonymous with retreat or retirement.[41] The old man in Virgil's passage, then, having retired, does not have to wait for the holidays, nor is he burdened by having to prioritise the 'more important' or 'more pressing' agricultural work as described in the rest of the *Georgics*. He is the only figure in this world that can devote any substantial time to the garden, which is perhaps a little ironic as he is also clearly limited in terms of his own lifespan.

Both Perkell and Clay have pointed to the significance of old age specifically within the *Georgic* world that the man occupies.[42] At *G.* 3.95-100, for example, Virgil describes an old stallion:

> *hunc quoque, ubi aut morbo grauis aut iam segnior annis*
> *deficit, abde domo, nec turpi ignosce senectae.*
> *frigidus in Venerem senior, frustraque laborem*
> *ingratum trahit, et, si quando ad proelia uentum est,*
> *ut quondam in stipulis magnus sine uiribus ignis,*
> *incassum furit.*

[39] There is a detailed discussion of the parallels between gardener and poet in Perkell (1981), who proposes that the old man, as a maker of order and beauty, participates in Virgil's ideal of the poet.
[40] The tradition of an old man in the garden can be found in both verse (e.g. Hom. *Od.* 24.205-344; M. Furius Bibaculus, fr. 1, Courtney; Petr. *Anth. Lat*. 471) and prose (e.g. Cic. *Cato* 51-55; Var. *R.* 3.16.10-11; Sen. *Ep.* 12; Longus Book 2). For a summary of scholarship on the old man, see Thibodeau (2001), n.1.
[41] This is demonstrated by Horace, *Carm.* 2.6.5-12, who names Tarentum as his second choice for retirement. Cf. Cicero's *de Senectute*, which also includes a notable concentration of old men - Q. Fabius Maximus Cunctator (4.10-11, 12.39), Archytas (12.39), and the host Nearchus (12.41); and Aulus Gellius' (*NA* 13.2) dialogue between Pacuvius (in retirement at Tarentum) and Accius about the merits of allowing poetic work to mature and bear fruit at an old age. In contrast to these approaches, Thomas (1992) prefers to link Tarentum with the pre-Theocritean location of Arcadia, therefore giving Virgil's passage a far-off, almost mythical aura; and, similarly, Klinger (1967), 309, expresses the belief that Virgil intended to evoke ancient Greek poetry and mythology, implicit in the learned and poetic *Oebalia* for Tarentum. For other literary references to Tarentum, see Nisbet and Hubbard (1978), 94-96.
[42] See Perkell (1981), 170-1; and Clay (1981), 60.

> Yet, you even shut up such a steed in the stalls when he begins to fail, worn with disease and burdened with years; and do not pity his inglorious old age, though he has often driven the foe in flight and claims Epirus or valiant Mycenae for his birthplace, and traces his line to Neptune himself for founder. The aged stallion is cold to passion, and he vainly struggles with a thankless task; when he comes to the fray his ardour is futile – as when a great fire rages in the stubble, but there is not strength in it.

In this passage, the stallion is to be harshly dismissed from the farmer's care and attention when he is no longer able to procreate or to make war. The old age of the stallion is described as dishonourable (*nec turpi ignosce senectae*, 3.96) and a condition that should be dealt with ruthlessly.[43] As Perkell points out, although this approach may seem harsh, the advice given here by Virgil mirrors that of other agricultural writers who also prescribe the elimination of old or sick animals in favour of those which will bring profit.[44] Cato, for example, emphasises old age when describing superfluous aspects of the farm that should be put on sale.[45] So, in an agricultural (or *Georgic*) context, so often synonymous with *labor* and toil, old age seems to suggest a sort of uselessness — the attributes of old age do not belong 'inside' the agricultural world, and should thus be cast 'out'.

This, in turn, links directly to Virgil's description of the actual plot of the old man's garden:[46]

> *...pauca relicti*
> *iugera ruris erant, nec fertilis illa iuvencis*
> *nec pecori opportuna seges nec commoda Baccho.*
>
> …a little plot of unwanted land,
> not rich enough for cattle,
> no use for sheep, unsuitable for vines.

It is particularly interesting to me that Virgil chooses to describe the plot through negation, with the tricolon repetition of *nec…nec…nec*, and, even more specifically, in relation to

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[43] OLD, *sv. 'turpi'* ('shameful to do, dishonourable, degrading' or 'guilty of disgraceful behavior or practices').
[44] Perkell (1981): 170.
[45] Cato, *Agr.* 2.7: *plostrum vetus, ferramenta vetera, servum senem*/ old wagon, old tools, old slave.
[46] Virg. *G.* 4.127-9.

agricultural concepts. In setting up a common trope and then utterly rejecting it, Virgil makes clear to us that the old man uses this land for his garden precisely because it cannot be used for any of the 'regular' agricultural activities:[47] Virgil singles out ploughing, pasturing, and growing vines here because crops, cattle, and vines are the three divisions of agriculture that form the overriding themes of the three previous books of the *Georgics.*[48] The use of *relicti* is also noteworthy in this description. '*Loci relicti'* is used in the *Corpus Agrimensorum* to denote land left unallocated outside the boundaries of *coloniae*, therefore suggesting again that the plot is somehow 'outside' of the rest of the agricultural landscape, and, by implication, perhaps even outside the scope of the agricultural writer.[49]

Overall, both the poetic task of Virgil and the age of the old man point to a teleological framework of time that has a direct impact on the way we perceive the garden space. We know that the garden, and thus the garden text, is viewed as a distraction from the agricultural task at hand. The difference between Virgil and the old man, then, and their ability and desire to 'garden' (metaphorically and literally) is an issue of time: Virgil is still actively participating in his agricultural task and, therefore, cannot afford to digress, whereas the old man is able to garden precisely because he is useless in terms of 'proper' agricultural work.[50] This reinforces the idea that the garden, as a space, can be perceived as sub-*Georgic* – it is 'below' agriculture in the space-time hierarchy. However, just because the old man and his garden are useless in this specific context, does that mean that they are useless altogether?[51] I will now turn to this issue in my final section on Virgil, which will focus on the alternative temporal framework also represented in the old man's garden.

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[47] Cf. Thomas (1992), 56-60, on the success of the old man as deliberately situated *outside* of the bounds of the agricultural areas which form the premise of the rest of the *Georgics*.

[48] See Virgil's opening statements at *G.* 1.1-5, where he sets out his programmatic aims: *quid faciat laetas segetes, quo sidere terram/ uertere, Maecenas, ulmisque adiungere uitis/ conueniat, quae cura boum, qui cultus habendo/ sit pecori, apibus quanta experientia parcis/ hinc canere incipiam* / What makes the crops joyous, beneath what star, Maecenas, it is well to turn the soil, and wed vines to elms, what tending the cattle need, what care the herd in breeding, what skill the thrifty bees – hence I shall begin my song.
The three 'divisions' of agriculture – crops, cattle, vines - are regularly mentioned together in a single couplet throughout the *Georgics*; for example, 1.443-4, 2.22-3, 2.143-4, 2.516-7, 4.329-31, 4.559-60.

[49] *Corpus Agrim.*, ed. C. Thulin, Vol. 1, 1913, 47. Clay (1981) also notes that the idea of the gardener as an outsider can be pushed further if we buy into Servius' argument that the old man was one of a group of pirates from Cilicia, whom Pompey rewarded for their loyalty by settling them in southern Spain. If Servius was correct, the old man is not even a native of Rome, nor does he have any political ties to it, and he lives in what appears to be 'complete isolation' on a 'seemingly useless plot'. Cf. Hor. *Carm.* 2.6.13 on Tarentum as a 'secluded corner of the land' (*terrarium…angulus*).

[50] Cf. Gowers (2000), 129, who states that "as the figure of the *senex Corycius* suggests, horticulture was the province and pastime of old men, and that made it an inappropriate subject for a poet in his prime".

[51] Note the use of *hic…tamen* (4.130) immediately after the negative tricolon *nec…nec…nec*.

Cyclical patterns of time in Virgil's garden

So far, the general concept of time that we have come across is that time can create limitations, which creates a hierarchical structure, which then impacts on our perception of space: the act of gardening is low-priority compared to other agricultural tasks, relegated to 'spare' time, thus creating the potential for the garden space to be marginalised. However, this hierarchical framework is not the only pattern of time on display.[52] The activities of the old man present us with a number of paradoxes. Firstly, his activities within the garden, as described in lines 130-146, are specifically aligned with the seasons – he picks roses in the spring (*vere*, 134) and fruit in the autumn (*autumno*, 134), trims hyacinths in the winter (*hiems*, 135), and curses the summer (*aestatem*, 138) for being late. This section of the garden passage makes clear that certain tasks must be done at certain times in order to be successful (another example of 'task time'), but that these tasks also combine to form a collective continuous cycle of planting, cultivation, and decay.

In fact, Thibodeau has argued convincingly that, despite the short passage length, what Virgil describes to us is actually 'unquestionably' the gardener's works over a period of three to four years;[53] and it is worth summarising his argument here. Virgil opens the passage by detailing how the land was when the old man first came to it, unused and largely covered in brush (*in dumis*, 130); next comes the planting of necessities and the old man's first harvest (the activities of the first year, 130-133); followed by the pruning of dead foliage from his hyacinths, which must belong to the start of the second year.[54] In the lines (and years) that follow, the old man starts to collect honey from his bees (140-41) and acquires trees (141) that develop into an orchard (142-3);[55] and, finally, (144-6) having transplanted them into rows as saplings, the trees are now fully mature and able to provide shade.[56] Thibodeau's

[52] Feeney (2007), 2, argues that, like so many features of Roman society, Roman time structures are premodern and modern at once, and, as such, they resist the 'simple dualisms' that have been used to characterise societies (including industrial versus pre-industrial, agrarian versus urban, and cyclical versus linear time). Cf. Laurence and Smith (1995-6), who seek to 'understand the nature of time at Rome as a culturally embedded system that relies upon a linear history and genealogy alongside an annual calendar of cyclical events'.
[53] Thibodeau (2001): 179-182.
[54] *Ibid*., 179, argues that the dead foliage implies the plants were in bloom during a previous season, with *comam* referring to dead leaves, not blooming flowers.
[55] *Ibid*., 180, n.11 states that it is idle to speculate on a plant's specific age but the point here is to highlight that, as the narrative progresses, the trend is for the plants to appears progressively more mature.
[56] *Ibid*., 180-2, details the author's interpretation of lines 144-6, which hinges on the belief that *etiam* (144) should be read as *et-iam*, with the *iam* signifying not 'already' but 'now' i.e. the trees were transplanted as saplings but can provide shade *now* they are mature. This interpretation makes it unnecessary to assume the 'exaggerated' claims that the old man, in some sort of super-human effort, transplanted the trees when they were fully grown. Note that, at line 144, Virgil describes the trees as *in versum* (rather than using a word such as *ordo*). This pun aligns the work of the gardener with the

argument points to how, although individual activities in the garden are supposedly fixed in terms of their seasonal appropriateness, the garden space as a whole is anything but static. The garden is a dynamic space with an ever-changing appearance – something is always growing, even when other elements are withering away.

Such a dynamic process is thus potentially at odds with the limitations imposed on the garden space by Virgil: he wants to frame the garden *excursus* as a digression from the 'essential' course of his didactic teleology and box it in as separate from the rest of the text, but the description of the cyclical growth patterns within his snapshot of the old man promotes a vision of growth and abundance within the garden that cannot necessarily be confined. This potential conflict, between the imposed limitations on the time to garden and the unlimited natural cycles within that garden, is evident in the description of the old man's activities cited above. What is particularly interesting in this section of the *excursus* is that, within the continual process of gardening, the old man is actually characterised as being ahead of time. Virgil conveys the old man's ability to anticipate the seasons through the repetition of *primus, primus* (first, 134/140), and *iam, iamque* (now, 137-146); he is consistently described as cramming in his productivity, through phrases such as *premens* (squeezing in, 131), *onerabat* (he used to pile high, 133), and *spumantia cogere pressis* (to overflow and force squirting [liquid] from squeezed [honeycombs], 132-2); and he is shown to be impatient at times with his cursing of 'slow' (*morantis*, 138) nature, even keen to work late into the night (132-3).[57] The old man's diligence is thus rewarded by the full realisation of natural potential i.e. every spring blossom bears autumnal fruit. Ironically, then, it is his awareness of his lack of time that actually pushes him to be 'ahead of the game' with his seasonal tasks.

We have already discussed how Virgil's characterisation of old age within the georgic world promotes the idea that, despite coming to the end of his life, the old man in the *excursus* is actually the only figure within the *Georgics* with the time to garden: unlike Virgil, for example, the old man has no 'essential' agricultural task to complete, and thus he has the 'spare' time required to garden because he is no longer useful within the agricultural world. However, Virgil's description of the actual gardening process shows that, although the old man is limited in his old age in terms of lifespan, and although he may be useless for 'proper' agricultural work, he is also unlimited or perhaps unbound from the usual constraints of that agricultural work. His productiveness and usefulness in the garden, and the success he

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creation of verses by the poet. Cf. Clay (1981), 65, n.26, who suggests that this phrase is a playful allusion to 'that ordering of nature which creates poetry'.

[57] Work extended into the evening (*lucubratio*) is commonly a sign of passion: see, e.g. Virg. *Ecl.* 8.85-8; Lucr. 1.140-2, and the passages discussed by Thomas (1999), 33-43.

achieves, stand in stark contrast to the limitations discussed previously. Once we enter the garden, old age is no longer the barrier it was in the outer agricultural world. Our conception of the effects of age and time inside the garden is markedly different to the conception we had when we were 'outside' with Virgil looking 'in'.

It is worth unpacking this juxtaposition further by considering the contrast and difference between the gardener and the farmer, and their engagement with cyclical patterns of time. Agricultural work in general is a product of task time that is assimilated to the natural rhythms of the earth,[58] and this is reflected in the *Georgics*, wherein the poem's time markers are all 'natural': time is organised not by dates but by the constellations, the seasons, the forces of the wind and rain, the sun, and the moon.[59] However, although located within the same rural sphere, and adhering to the same broad principles of cyclical time, the activities of the gardener and the farmer do not simply co-exist: the gardener's uselessness in terms of the rest of the *Georgics*, and the space-time hierarchy implied, suggests to us that the natural cycles of the garden sit 'below' the cycles of the farm i.e. one can only participate in the garden cycle once the 'first' farming cycle is complete. The successes of the old man within his supposedly leftover piece of land, though, also 'implicitly invites us to reconsider the nature of the truly useful':[60] the old man is clearly useful in his garden, and so we must be careful not to judge his actions from a position of supposed farming superiority.

Furthermore, the differences between the harsh world of the farmer and the apparent bliss of the gardener shows us that the supposed limitations associated with our hierarchical structures of time disappear once you have the opportunity to step inside the garden. In particular, the garden is shown to be both miraculous and non-commercial, as demonstrated by the succinct but telling phrase *dapes inemptae* (unbought feasts, 133).[61] That the garden is

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[58] Var. *R.* 1.26 details a conversation about time between a group of punningly named friends – Agrius, Fundanius, and Scrofa. Although the friends have differing views on exactly the best method for following the natural time cycles, it is clear from their conversation that anyone planning a landscaping project of any kind must know that cultivation involves knowing the cycles (seasonal/annual) and understanding teleology, cf. Spencer (2010), 58.

[59] Feeney (2007): 207. In particular, the author notes that Virgil sticks to this 'Hesiodic tradition' of agricultural writing, despite the fact that the *Georgics* were published some fifteen years after Caesar's calendar reforms i.e. 'more than enough time…for the poet to have assimilated the new technology'.

[60] Perkell (1981): 171. Cf. Quinn (1968), 6 and 399, who uses the phrase 'implicit comment' to 'denote Virgil's curious, characteristic technique, not of understatement but of non-statement…He leaves us to formulate, if we choose, the moral implications of the narrative'.

[61] Cato, *Agr.* 8.2 notes that it is advisable to have a garden planted with vegetables and flowers for garlands if you are near a town. The old man, who seems to work only for himself on his *relictus* plot, does not participate in this sort of commercial activity – compare, for example, his 'unbought feasts' with the description of Simulus in the *Moretum*, who produces a surplus to sell on, and Varro's description of two brothers who were able to make a large profit by keeping bees on their land and selling honey (*R.* 3.16.10). On Virgil's garden's uncommercial character, see Wilkinson (1969), 264. Grimal (1943), 413-5 comments on the miraculous nature of the particular combination of flowers described in the passage.

non-commercial is important because we are left with the sense that 'such a place is meant to symbolise an idea of beauty'; and, therefore, the gardener's 'esthetic, materially superfluous goal and non-destructive relationship with nature' stands in stark contrast to the aggressive and *labor*-focused activities of the farmer (characterised by terms such as *capere, fallere, insectari, terrere,* and *arma*).[62] In fact, the gardening passage reminds us more of the mood of Virgil's earlier work, the *Eclogues*: not only does the gardener seem to enjoy a magical harmony with nature, but the garden itself also recalls the *locus amoenus*, especially with the mention of the shady trees (146). As Gale has noted, Virgil's garden reminds us of Tityrus' farm in *Eclogue* 1, which is simultaneously poor and uncompromising, but also a haven of peace and beauty:[63]

> *Fortunate senex, ergo tua rura manebunt*
> *et tibi magna satis, quamvis lapis omnia nudus*
> *limosoque palus obducat pascua iunco.*
> *non insueta gravis temptabunt pabula fetas*
> *nec mala vicini pecoris contagia laedent.*
> *fortunate senex, hic inter flumina nota*
> *et fontis sacros frigus captabis opacum;*
> *hinc tibi, quae semper, vicino ab limite saepes*
> *Hyblaeis apibus florem depasta salicti*
> *saepe levi somnum suadebit inire susurro;*
> *hinc alta sub rupe canet frondator ad auras,*
> *nec tamen interea raucae, tua cura, palumbes*
> *nec gemere aeria cessabit turtur ab ulmo.*

> Happy old man! So these lands will still be yours, and large enough for you, through bare stones cover all, and the marsh chokes your pastures with slimy rushes. Still, no strange herbage shall try your breeding ewes, no baneful infection from a neighbour's flock shall harm them. Happy old man! Here, amid familiar streams and sacred springs, you shall enjoy the cooling shade. On this side, as of old, on your neighbour's border, the hedge whose willow blossoms are sipped by Hybla's bees shall often with its gentle hum sooth you to slumber; on that, under the towering rock, the

[62] Perkell (1981): 172-3. There is no explicit reference to *labor* in the entire description of the old man's activities, even though he is clearly 'working'. For a summary of the farmer's activities in the *Georgics*, and the depiction of *labor*, see Gale (2000), 158-185.
[63] Gale (2000), 181, commenting on Virg. *Ecl.* 1.46-58. Note the repeated references to old age *(fortunate senex*, 46/51) and bees (*apibus*, 54).

> woodman's song shall fill the air; while still the cooing wood pigeons, your pets, and the turtle dove shall not cease their moaning from the elm tops.

The similarities to Tityrus' farm demonstrate how Virgil's gardening interlude has something of the 'teasing, dreamlike quality so characteristic of the *Eclogues*', which similarly combine real place names with elements of fantasy.[64] By straddling the line between fictive and real, the old man's garden thus once again demonstrates a rejection of any sort of strict categorisation.

Finally, the juxtaposition between 'inside' and 'outside' the garden, between continuous natural cycles and strict teleological frameworks, can also be seen in the final two lines (147-8) of the passage, where Virgil returns to the issue of his poetic task and reiterates the supposed limitations he has on writing about gardens. Here, the poet claims that he is shut out by the unfair constraints of space (*spatiis exclusus iniquis*), but he also states that he is leaving the subject matter for later poets to discuss (*aliis post me memoranda relinquo*). *Memoranda relinquo* provides a neat closural point to the opening *memini…vidisse* at the beginning of the garden passage proper, and thus seemingly signals a finite end point to the gardening discussion; but, crucially, the neat enclosing frame of the *praeteritio* is undermined by Virgil's engagement with a continual process. By framing the description in terms of memory, Virgil's backwards glance at the beginning of the passage becomes a forward one at the end, as he positions himself within a process of bequeathal, inheritance, and continued cultivation.

His request that later poets pick up where he left off and cultivate the garden (as text) mirrors the ownership cycle of real garden space.[65] As explored in chapter one, Pliny the Elder tells us that the *heredium* (two acres of land that corresponded to the original land grants assigned to Roman citizens by Romulus) acted as a sort of precursor to the *hortus*-proper, and it is worth quoting his statement again here:[66]

> *in XII tabulis legum nostrarum nusquam nominatur villa, semper in significatione ea hortus, in horti vero heredium.*

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[64] Gale (2000): 181. If we buy into the argument of Thomas (1992), see n. 19 above, then this would support the claim that Virgil's garden belongs more to the pastoral tradition than the didactic/georgic one. Gale (2000), 182-3, suggests a more Epicurean reading of the old man's isolation, stating that the fleeting digression is a result of the old man's 'philosophical' lifestyle, which 'is not for the poet of *labor*'; but she also notes that 'pastoral' and 'Epicurean' readings of the passage are not incompatible.
[65] Cf. Thibodeau (2001), 189-91, who details the four possible interpretations of what this 'inheritance' constitutes: 1) horticulture as a technical subject; 2) the pair of real-world entities, the gardener and his garden; 3) the narrative of the gardener and his garden; and 4) narratives of a gardening *senex* in the texts of Virgil's predecessors.
[66] Plin. *Nat.* 19.50. Cf. n. 45 and 46, chpt.1.

> In our laws of the Twelve Tables the farm [*villa*] is never named, instead the word garden [*hortus*] is always used in that regard, while the garden proper is the 'family estate' [*heredium*].

If, then, we accept that contemporary Romans would recognise the *hortus* as once being a *heredium*, Pliny's comments here points to the garden's important role as a symbol of the continuity of land from one generation of the family to the next; and Virgil follows this pattern in the way he bequeaths his own garden (the text) to his (literary) successors, a task famously taken up by Columella in Book 10 of *De Re Rustica*, which I will be turning to shortly.

As poet and cultivator of his garden text, Virgil thus manages to express both a rejection of garden cultivation due to a lack of time (and thus space); but also an engagement with a tradition of bequeathal, inheritance, and continued cultivation that transcends the constraints of the space-time framework he, perhaps artificially, imposes on his *excursus*. Thibodeau, for example, argues that to engage in this tradition is to perform a task that transcends temporal qualities; and that, for this reason, we often speak of someone who works within a tradition as seeking to 'rise above time'.[67] We are left with the sense that, yes, there is no time for the garden *now*, but that does not mean there is no time *ever.* In fact, the story of the old man has shown us that what might be deemed unproductive and useless in one temporal framework can actually be very productive and useful in another – he succeeds in the garden, even though his time there could be categorised as useless in relation to other agricultural tasks and spaces. What we have here is an issue of perspective, and we tend to be drawn more towards viewing the garden within the overriding teleology of the *Georgics*, rather than as an entity in its own right.

Implications

I would like to end this section on Virgil by reflecting on a forceful statement made by Mynors in his commentary on the *Georgics*:[68]

> *Gardening, as far as we can see, is to the Ancients, as to us, no part of agriculture…and it forms no necessary part of the Georgica*.

[67] Thibodeau (2001): 187. In this context, it is unsurprising that gardens were a prevalent feature of Roman funerary monuments. Von Stackelberg (2009), 62-3, has noted the effectiveness of garden space as an organic monument due to its close relationship with time and memory: 'gardens are effective monuments because their seasonality makes them future-orientated spaces. A garden is a sensory sum of what was there before…its present incarnation…and what is to come…They are spaces that bridge the past with the present and the future'. On funerary gardens, cf. n.74, chpt.1.
[68] Mynors (1990): 273.

Based on the evidence discussed, I believe it is time that we revisited such a straightforward exclusionary understanding of the garden in relation to agriculture. My aim in part one was to explore how the temporal structures at play in Virgil's garden *excursus* have the potential to inform us on the relationship between garden space and the wider agricultural network it is positioned within. The juxtaposition of teleological and cyclical structures points to a split between the time of the text (Virgil's agricultural task), which is limited, and the time of the actual garden, which is unlimited. The lack of 'text time' suggests that the garden is viewed as sub-*Georgic*, but the potential for continued cultivation and the fact that, ultimately, it is not completely excluded, shows us that it is still part of the agricultural world. It is just about finding the *right* time to devote to the space. The garden is both parallel and alternative to agriculture, but it also has a continuous and contiguous relationship with it; and Virgil expresses the oscillation between these two different relationships through his inclusion of opposing and alternative dimensions of time within the passage.

What happens, though, when someone does find the time to 'garden'? Does this change the above interpretation of the garden space, or are the patterns expressed by Virgil merely repeated but on a larger scale? Does the garden-as-text continue to sit uneasily within its agricultural framework? With these questions in mind, it is time to turn to part two of this chapter, an examination of Columella Book 10.

Part Two: Columella Book 10, and the Roman Garden as Supplement

Between AD 56 and 65, during the reign of Nero, a Spanish writer called Lucius Junius Moderatus Columella released a twelve-book agricultural treatise on farming – *De Re Rustica*.[69] Nestled between nine books covering varying aspects of farm life, and two books concerning the role of the overseer (or *vilicus*) and the role of his wife in the management of the household, Book 10 of *De Re Rustica* jumps out at the reader immediately. For here, in comparison to the eleven other books all written in didactic prose, we find a 436-hexameter poem dedicated solely to the garden, a formal and rather obvious departure from the style and subject matter of the rest of the manual. Like Virgil, then, Columella draws attention to his garden poem by deliberately setting it apart from the rest of his text. Unlike Virgil, though, the scope of Book 10 is clearly much larger – this garden poem follows the entire course of a

[69] A reference to an ex-consul, P. Volusius at 1.7.3, which seems to suggest he is dead, may refer to Lucius Volusius Saturninus, who died in AD 56 (Tac. *Ann.* 13.30; Plin. *Nat.* 7.62, 156); and this, taken together with the reference to Seneca at 3.3.3, who died in AD 65 (Tac. *Ann.* 15.60-64), as still being alive, gives us the probable composition window of AD 56-65. See White (2013): 10.

year, structured as a year-round sequence, beginning and ending in the autumn, with additional attention also given to the preparation of the plot and an invocation to the Muses.

Why is Columella making such a fuss about gardens? As my analysis of Virgil's gardening *excursus* has demonstrated, it is 'not often that artichokes and cucumbers get forced into such lurid focus'![70] Building on the implications of part one of this chapter, then, part two will continue to explore the relationship between garden space and the broader agricultural network it is positioned within by examining the status of the garden-as-text within Columella's agricultural treatise. More specifically, it will examine the prose preface to Book 10 as a 'paratext' to the verse book proper, and I will question the impact of this framing strategy on our perception of both the garden text and garden space itself. My analysis will consider Columella's stated motivations for writing the book, as well as his comments on the garden text's position in relation to the other eleven books, and this, in turn, will reveal two different ways in which Columella himself frames Book 10: first, as a direct response to Virgil's gardening *excursus*, and, second, as a part-payment towards the completion of his own manual. Finally, in order to reconcile these two potentially conflicting framings of the garden poem, I will introduce Derrida's concept of the supplement as a means of articulating the paradoxical garden-agriculture relationship first introduced to us by Virgil and further developed in Columella's text.

As with part one, though, before we delve into the intricacies of the text, it is important to contextualise Columella's work and his position in the literary canon, and also explain why a paratextual reading of Book 10 is particularly helpful in examining the issues I am most concerned with.

Introducing Columella

Most of what we know about Columella is derived directly from *De Re Rustica*:[71] born in Gades, Spain (8.16.9; 10.185), he went on to serve as an officer in the sixth legion, before settling not far from Rome.[72] Although we do not know the exact dates, he was a contemporary of Seneca the Younger (3.3.3) and Seneca's brother Gallio (9.6.12), and also a younger contemporary of Pliny the Elder, who cites Columella several times throughout his

[70] Gowers (2000): 127.
[71] All unattributed numbered references in part 2 refer to *De Re Rustica*.
[72] Columella's military service is recorded in an inscription (*ILS* 2923) found in Tarentum, rather ironically considering my earlier discussion of Virgil's old man, where the poet was either buried or died. For a concise account of the life of Columella, see Forster (1950).

own agricultural work.[73] *De Re Rustica*, Columella's sole surviving work, is an 'exhaustive compendium' of agricultural information:[74] Book 1 treats the general layout and organisation of the farm; Book 2 discusses ploughing; Books 3-5 deal with vines and trees; Books 6-7 treat animals and livestock; Books 8-9 then move on to poultry, fish, game, and bees; Book 10 is our garden poem, followed by Book 11, which also treats gardening as part of a broader discussion of the role and duties of the *vilicus*;[75] and, finally, Book 12 covers the role of the *vilicus*' wife.[76] In preparation for this monumental task, Columella claims to have consulted a great many agricultural writers (1.1.1-14), and he also draws on his own experience (3.3.3; 3.9.2).[77]

Book 10, the focus of my study, consists of a 436-hexameter poem preceded by a prose preface. The garden poem itself follows the course of the year, beginning and ending in the autumn, and is structured as follows:

a) Preface Pr. 1-5 (prose)
b) Proem (1-5)
c) Preparation of the plot (6-34)
d) Invocation to the Muses (35-40)
e) Autumn tasks (41-54)
f) Winter tasks (55-76)
g) Spring tasks (77-310): subdivided into beginning of spring (77-214), a digression on the poet's task (215-229), spring activities resumed (230-254), and first harvest (255-310)
h) Summer tasks (311-422): subdivided into early summer (311-368), summer harvest (369-399), and late summer (400-422)
i) Autumn again – the end of the gardening year (423-432)
j) Epilogue (433-436)

Despite the fact that there is clear value in this text, in that it has more to say on gardening than the rest of classical antiquity put together, Book 10 was, for the most part, generally regarded until fairly recently as a 'misguided experiment, an uninspired pastiche of clippings

[73] Plin. *Nat.* 8.153; 15.66; 17.51; 17.162; 18.303; 19.68.
[74] White (2013): 10.
[75] On gardening in Book 11 specifically, see Henderson (2002a).
[76] Many manuscripts also preserve an index to Books 1-11 at the end of Book 11, which Henderson (2002a), 112 (repeated at Henderson (2004), 7), calls an 'extremely coherent reference system…one which makes Columella…the most consultable classical text to have come down to us'. An additional book, *De arboribus*, is also preserved within the text and often positioned between Books 2 and 3, but it does not form part of the extant *De Re Rustica*. In fact, Richter (1972) has argued that, on the basis of style, content, and vocabulary, *De arboribus* is not the work of Columella at all.
[77] He also speaks highly of his uncle, Marcus Columella, a successful farmer and landowner who owned a farm in Spain (2.15.4; 5.5.15; 7.2.4).

and half lines' from the 'greater' Virgil, and, therefore, considerably 'second-rate'.[78] However, the combination of a broad rehabilitation of the so-called 'minor' Latin poets, and a more sophisticated approach to Roman gardens in general, has pushed Columella considerably more into the spotlight; and his gardening text, as well as the rest of *De Re Rustica*, continues to be explored.[79]

It should also be made clear at this point exactly which 'type' of garden Columella is talking about in his treatise. As previously discussed, there is a semantic division between the singular *hortus*, denoting the traditional kitchen garden, and the plural *horti*, denoting a more ornamental, aesthetically-pleasing space of relaxation or *otium*. Columella and his contemporaries, living under the *luxuria* of Nero's rule, would be well accustomed to the more ornamental *horti*. Indeed, Suetonius uses gardens as an example in his invective against the emperor as a sign of his luxury and perverse behaviour.[80] However, although there was a gradual ideological shift from practical to aesthetic concerns, this was by no means a linear progression. The more practical *hortus* did not simply cease to exists – it still had its place in Roman society – and this is perfectly exemplified by Columella choosing to write about a traditional *hortus* in Book 10, despite the fact that *horti* were probably more relevant to the contemporary elite Roman lifestyle of his readership.[81]

Columella's choice of the *hortus* is not, however, that surprising in the context of an agricultural treatise such as *De Re Rustica*, particularly because, as we shall see, he explicitly positions himself as an 'heir' to another agricultural text – the *Georgics* – picking up the

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[78] I borrow this phrasing from Gowers (2000), 127. This neglect of Columella is actually a fairly 'modern' phenomenon. Columella is quoted by name in Plin. *Nat.* several times (see n.73, above); and he is also widely quoted in later antiquity by authors such as Pelagonius, Eumelus, Vegetius, Palladius, Cassiodorus, and Isidore. Forster (1950), 128, notes the neglect of Columella from the eighteenth century onwards.

[79] The most recent commentary of Book 10 in English is White (2013), but there are several other editions of Book 10 that include commentary and textual notes: e.g. Ash (1930); Santoro (1946); Marsili (1962); Saint-Denis (1969); Fernandez-Galiano (1975); and Boldrer (1996). The rise in scholarship on Columella post-1960 coincides with the growth of interest in gardens resulting from the Jashemski excavations in the Bay of Naples during the 1960s. For a summary of approaches to Columella, see White (2013), 12-19. Notable scholarship includes, but is not limited to, Baldwin (1963); Dallinges (1964); Noé (2002); Milnor (2005); Gowers (2000); Henderson (2002a); Pagán (2006), 19-36; Doody (2007); and Spencer (2010), 86-104.

[80] Suet. *Nero*, 22.2. For the range of associations between ornamental gardens and morally unacceptable luxury and excess, cf. n.58, chpt. 1.

[81] Note that Columella specifically recommends to avoid fine sculpture in his garden (10.29-34), therefore distancing his treatment from ornamental connotations. By referring to his composition as *labor* four times in Book 10 (pr.3; 67-8; 329-30; 339-40) and *laborare* once (31), he also aligns his work as a poet with agricultural toil. It is not unusual for poets to use metaphors for the writing process – poetry is a form of work that is almost impossible to represent, and so descriptions of physical labour allow the poet to find ways of anchoring the poetic product in an activity, e.g. in ancient Greek, writing from left to right and right to left alternately was called *boustrophedon* ('as the ox turns'). For a discussion of the rendering of manual labour as a means of materializing the process of writing, see Fitzgerald (1996), 411-413.

supposed challenge of *Georgics* 4.147-8 to 'fill in' the part on gardens that Virgil left to posterity. It is, then, the length and format of Columella's gardening discussion that has raised eyebrows. For, unlike Virgil, who dealt with gardens in what can only be described as a fleeting manner, Columella dedicates an entire verse book of his otherwise prose treatise to the topic. Why does he have so much more time and space to devote to the subject than Virgil? Is it simply a case of wanting to 'expand' the *Georgics'* gardening passage? What does Book 10 tell us about the status and perception of the *hortus* for Columella and his contemporaries, and has this changed significantly since the time of Virgil?

In order to explore these questions, I am, perhaps rather surprisingly, not going to discuss the hexameter poem at all in this chapter, but, instead, focus on the prose preface to Book 10. There are two main reasons for this approach: first, this is where we can gain the most information regarding Columella's motivations for writing about gardens; and second, the preface acts as an important threshold, or 'paratext', to the poem, the value of which has been underestimated in the past.[82]

The Concept of the Paratext

So, what exactly is a paratext? For Genette, who coined the term, a text is rarely presented to us in an unadorned state, but, rather, has features – or paratexts – that surround it or extend it (such as a title, illustrations, table of contents, or a preface), and that enable it to become a book and be presented to its readers.[83] They are also phenomena which, according to Jansen, 'direct our attention to the question of how we construct our role as audiences' – paratextual thinking demands itself as a 'dynamic' and 'multidirectional' approach to the ways in which a work frames itself and its meanings, and also the 'complexities behind our own interpretative strategy'.[84]

Key to our understanding of the paratext is the meaning of the word 'para'. Although this preposition is typically understood as 'beside' or 'next to', deconstructive thinking has pointed to the limitations of viewing 'para' objects as simply separate and detachable

[82] Jansen (2014), 3, notes that, in comparison to other literature, paratextuality has had a relatively low profile in the study of Roman texts. She posits that a likely reason for this low profile is the dominance of intertextuality in scholarship on Greco-Roman literature. When paratextuality has been investigated, it is predominantly in relation to the title of ancient works: for example, Horsfall (1981); Ballester (1990); and Schröeder (1999).
[83] Genette (1997): 1.
[84] Jansen (2014): 2. Here, the author also gives an example of paratextual questioning: how would we read Joyce's *Ulysses* if it were not titled *Ulysses*? Does the title encourage 'epic' readers? What if we have not read Homer? Is passive knowledge of the epic character enough to influence our reading?

entities.[85] 'Para', therefore, according to J. Hillis-Miller, signifies both 'proximity and distance, similarity and difference, interiority and exteriority'; and a thing 'in para' is not only 'simultaneously on both sides of the boundary between inside and outside', but it is also the boundary itself.[86] Thus, by mediating between what is strictly inside and outside of a text, the paratext operates as a liminal threshold.[87] Although it is not *the* text, it is still *some* text; and, as a verbal frame, it can 'enhance the text, it can define it, it can contrast with it, it may distance it, or it may even be disguised as to form part of it'.[88] The construction, placement, and functionality of the paratext raises questions about the relationship between text and frame, between the creator of the text and the public, and between senders and receivers of the message of the text; and, perhaps most importantly, it has the potential to control one's reading of *the* text.[89]

It is in this context that we should view the prose preface to Book 10 of *De Re Rustica*. Although we cannot completely ignore how Columella describes the *hortus* in the actual verse book, my primary concern in this chapter is to consider how his garden-as-text is situated in relation to both his own agricultural treatsise and Virgil's garden *excursus*, and whether or not the placement and construction of the text has implications for our understanding of garden space more generally. In its functional role as a paratext, the preface to Book 10 is of the utmost importance to addressing these concerns; and, by focusing on a reading of Book 10 in terms of its margins and edges, my analysis of Columella thus supports the paratextual approach set out by Jansen, in that it 'explores the nature of the relationship between a text's frame, its centre and its contexts, as well as the way in which audiences approach and plot this set of relations'.[90]

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[85] See Jansen (2014): 5. 'Para' as 'beside' or 'next to' corresponds to the function of the Greek preposition with the dative, but the dative can also mean 'association with' something or someone; and, in the accusative, 'para' can be spatial (by, alongside, of, near, on), comparative, or oppositional (against, contrary to); cf. Beekes (2010), *s.v.* 'παρά'. Vocabulary in *para* also forms a branch of words which employ some form of the Indo-European root *per*, the base meaning of which is 'through', but the semantics of which extend to 'in front of', 'before', 'toward', 'against', 'near', 'at', or 'around.

[86] Hillis Miller (1979): 179.

[87] Note, here, the debt to Derrida on the Kantian *parergon*, as explored in *The Truth in Painting* (1987), esp. 15-147. Derrida (1987), 9, defines the *parergon* as neither work (*ergon*) nor outside the work (*hors d'oeuvre*), neither inside nor outside, a frame that stands out against the two grounds but, with respect to each of these grounds, merges in to one another – Marriner (2002), 351. Cf. Platt and Squire (2017), 49: 'For Derrida, frames do not just circumscribe their contents, but actively mediate between the 'inside' and 'outside' as permeable sites of communication: frames establish the conditions according to which the work is experienced'. For a summary of Derrida's approach, and relevant bibliography, see Platt and Squire (2017), 48-58, esp. n.89.

[88] Maclean (1991): 274.

[89] Lejeune (1975): 45.

[90] Jansen (2014): 1. Once again, we must note the parallels between paratextuality and Derrida's approach, as set out by Platt and Squire (2017), 56: 'In dismantling the conceptual framework that underpins Kantian aesthetics, and refusing any straightforward detachment of *ergon* from *parergon*, Derrida reveals how it is their very peripheral status that makes frames so paradoxically central to any

Columella's motivations for writing Book 10

The majority of the information required to consider Columella's motivation for writing about gardens in such an unusual way can be found in the prose preface to Book 10, where he explains his reasoning behind the book and its verse format. Here, Columella discusses two distinct, but also interrelated relationships – one with Silvinus, his patron, and one with Virgil, his literary predecessor.[91] These two relationships, in turn, reflect two different motivations for writing Book 10: first, Silvinus' request for the final 'payment' of work, which establishes a connection between Book 10 and the rest of *De Re Rustica*; and, second, Columella's self-appointed status as Virgil's 'heir', therefore also creating a link between Book 10 and the rest of the *Georgics*:[92]

[1] Faenoris tui, Silvine, quod stipulanti spoponderam tibi, reliquam pensiunculam percipe. Nam superioribus novem libris hac minus parte debitum, quod nunc persolvo, reddideram. Superest ergo cultus hortorum segnis ac neglectus quondam veteribus agricolis, nunc vel celeberrimus. Siquidem cum parcior apud priscos esset frugalitas, largior tamen pauperibus fuit usus epularum, lactis copia ferinaque ac domesticarum pecudum carne velut aqua frumentoque summis atque humillimis victum tolerantibus.	[1] Accept, Silvinus, the small remaining payment of your interest, which I pledged to you at your insistence, for I had repaid the debt in the preceding nine books, except for this part, which I now pay. Therefore, there remains the cultivation of gardens, which was formerly idle and neglected among farmers of old, but is now extremely popular. Indeed, although thrift was stingier in earlier generations, nevertheless, among the poor, their enjoyment of feasts was more extensive, with the highest and the lowest-ranking people maintaining a diet that included an abundance of milk and meat of both wild and domestic animals, as though on water and grain.

theory or interpretation of the visual object. Frames cannot be detached from the *ergon* framed, since what we see to be that *ergon* closely depends upon its frame'. In the same vein, I will argue that the framing of the Book 10 by the preface, its paratext, is central to our interpretation and reading of both the garden text and gardens themselves.

[91] Columella addresses Silvinus at the beginning of every book. Ash (1930), 27, remarks that the patron is 'otherwise unknown', which Boldrer (1996), 95, believes is striking: 'L'oscurità del personaggio sorprende considerando l'importanza dell'opera a lui dedicata'. 'Silvinus' can be translated as 'Forester' or 'Woody', which has led Henderson (2004), 33 and 51, to argue that he is a fictitious character. The name Silvinus also recalls the woodland deity Silvanus, an apt reference given the agricultural focus of the text: see, e.g. Cato, *Agr.* 83; Virg. *Ecl.* 10.24, *G.* 1.20, *A.* 8.600.

[92] This translation, as with all my translations of Columella Book 10, follows White (2013), with minor amendments.

[2] Mox cum sequens et praecipue nostra aetas dapibus libidinosa pretia constituerit cenaeque non naturalibus desideriis sed censibus aestimentur, plebeia paupertas submota a pretiosioribus cibis ad vulgares compellitur.	[2] Soon when the following age, and especially our own, established arbitrarily high costs for banquets, and meals are judged not by natural desires but expenses, the common people, in their poverty, having been shut out from costlier meals, are driven to common fare.
[3] Quare cultus hortorum, quoniam fructus magis in usu est, diligentius nobis, quam tradiderunt maiores, praecipiendus est: isque, sicut institueram, prosa oratione prioribus subnecteretur exordiis, nisi propositum meum expugnasset frequens postulatio tua, quae praecepit, ut poeticis numeris explerem georgici carminis omissas partes, quas tamen et ipse Vergilius significaverat, posteris se memorandas relinquere. Neque enim aliter istud nobis fuerat audendum quam ex voluntate vatis maxime venerandi:	[3] For this reason, since the produce of gardens is more in use, I must prescribe their cultivation more accurately than our ancestors passed down to us; and, as I had decided it, it would have been tacked on to the preceding instructions in prose, if my purpose had not been defeated by your constant demand, which succeeded in getting me to complete, in poetic measures, the missing sections of the Georgics, which even Virgil himself had expressly stated were to be left to posterity. For I would not have dared such a thing except by the will of the most honorable poet;
[4] cuius quasi numine instigante pigre sine dubio propter difficultatem operis, verumtamen non sine spe prosperi successus aggressi sumus tenuem admodum et paene viduatam corpore materiam, quae tam exilis est, ut in consummatione quidem totius operis annumerari veluti particula possit laboris nostri, per se vero et quasi suis finibus terminata nullo modo speciose conspici. Nam etsi multa sunt eius quasi membra, de quibus aliquid possumus effari, tamen eadem tam exigua sunt, ut, quod aiunt Graeci, ex incomprehensibili parvitate arenae funis effici non possit.	[4] With his divine spirit, as it were, goading me on, I have approached – though doubtless sluggishly due to the difficulty of the task, yet not without hope of favorable success – a subject that was narrow and almost bereft of substance, and one that is so meagre that, on the one hand, in the completion of the entire work it can be reckoned as a small part of the task, but on the other hand, in itself bound by its own limits it cannot be the object of attention. For even if it has many limbs, so to speak, about which I can say something, nevertheless they are so slender that, as the Greeks say, one cannot make a rope out of an imperceptible bit of sand.
[5] Quare quidquid est istud, quod elucubravimus, adeo propriam sibi laudem non vindicat, ut boni consulat, si non sit dedecori prius editis a me scriptorum monumentis. Sed iam praefari desinamus.	[5] For this reason, whatever this is which I have composed by burning the midnight oil, it is so far from claiming the praise appropriate to it that I would take it as a good sign if it does not reflect badly on my earlier works. But let me now put an end to the preface.

Although the move from prose to verse in Book 10 would undoubtedly be jarring, Columella prepares his readers for this change even before the prose preface by noting at the end of Book 9 that his patron has requested a garden-verse experiment:[93]

> *Sed iam consummata disputatione de villatici pecudibus atque pastionibus, quae* ***reliqua*** *nobis rusticarum rerum* ***pars*** *subest, de cultu hortorum, Publi Silvine, deinceps ita, ut et tibi et Gallioni nostro complacuerat, in carmen conferemus.*
>
> Having now finished the discussion of the animals kept at the farmhouse and their feeding, the **remaining part** of husbandry still to be treated, namely the cultivation of gardens, will now be presented in verse in accordance with the desire which both you, Publius Silvinus, and our friend Gallio were pleased to express.

It might appear insignificant, but the fact that Columella refers to Book 10 as *reliqua* is telling, for what is 'remaining' is surely an integral part of the treatise, in that it would not be complete without it. There seems to be no question that Book 10 was going to be included in the treatise, that the subject was always going to be gardening, and even that it was going to be dealt with in verse; and the first lines of the prose preface to Book 10 again reiterate that it should be seen as the last payment from Columella to his patron Silvinus:[94]

> *Faenoris tui, Silvine, quod stipulanti spoponderam tibi, reliquam pensiunculam percipe. Nam superioribus novem libris hac minus parte debitum, quod nunc persolvo, reddideram.*
>
> Accept, Silvinus, the small remaining payment of your interest, which I pledged to you at your insistence, for I had repaid the debt in the preceding nine books, except for this part, which I now pay.

It is only at the beginning of Book 11 that Columella states he has 'over-run' his original tally of books:[95]

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[93] Col. 9.16.2.

[94] Col. 10. pr. 1. Note that *stipulanti spoponderam* refers to the pledge of undertaking a contract and is used in a technical-legal sense at, e.g., Cic. *Q. Rosc.* 13 (*stipulantus es – ubi, quo die, quo tempere, quo praesente? Quis spopondisse me dicis*); and Var. *R.* 2.2.5-6 (*emptor stipulantur…haec sic recte fieri spondesne*). Gowers (2000), 146 n. 41, notes that *stipulanti* here also recalls its agricultural origins, from *stipula* ('stubble').

[95] Col. 11.1.2. The placement of Book 10, coupled with the statements at the end of Book 9 and beginning of Book 11, has led scholars to believe that it was originally conceived as the end of the entire treatise: see, e.g., Milnor (2005), 258; Pagán (2006), 19; and Henderson (2002a), probably the most thorough treatment of the issue of placement and addition of Books 11 and 12.

> *Quae quamvis primo rei rusticae libro videbar aliquatenus executus; quoniam tamen ea simili desiderio noster Augustalis saepius flagitabat, numerum, quem iam quasi consummaveram,* ***voluminum excessi****, et hoc undecimum praeceptum rusticationis memoriae tradidi.*
>
> Although, to some extent, I have already accomplished this in my first book on Agriculture, yet since my friend the priest of Augustus rather often demanded it of me with an eagerness which matches your own, I have **exceeded the number** of books which I had already practically completed, and have published this eleventh book of the principles of husbandry.

The question remains, then, not 'why gardening' but, rather, why so much gardening, and why *now*?

Columella deals directly with these issues in Book 10's preface. At pr. 1-3, he says that the reason why he must prescribe the cultivation of gardens more accurately than before (*Quare cultus hortorum, quoniam fructus magis in usu est, diligentius nobis, quam tradiderunt maiores, praecipiendus est*, pr. 3) is because of the increase of banquets as a form of conspicuous consumption for the elites: previously, the rich and poor had both eaten well (*Siquidem cum parcior apud priscos esset frugalitas, largior tamen pauperibus fuit usus epularum*, pr. 1); but, now, because the rich have driven up the price of food so high, 'common people' have been forced back to 'common fare' i.e. they have been forced back to gardening in order to be more self-sufficient (*plebeia paupertas submota a pretiosioribus cibis ad vulgares compellitur*, pr. 2).[96] So, farmers 'of old' had neglected the practice of gardening (*neglectus quondam veteribus agricolis*, pr.1), but it is now extremely popular again through necessity and, thus, deserves our attention once more. The use of *agricolis* is important here because it places Columella's garden firmly within an agricultural context. By focusing on the traditional ideal of the productive vegetable plot, Columella explicitly aligns his garden with traditional Roman values of self-sufficiency, and also distances it from the extravagant consumption and *luxuria* of his own time: he does not just talk of *agricolis*, but, rather, *veteribus agricolis*, therefore deliberately evoking a supposed bygone era.[97] Columella's justifications for the timing of and the need for a more thorough treatment of gardening in this context thus appear entirely reasonable.

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[96] Cf. Col. 1. *pr.*13-21, where the poet contrasts the respect given to farming in the past with the disdain for the subject in the present, which he attributes to modern luxurious living. On Columella's attitude to the past in this passage specifically, see Doody (2007), 190; and, more generally, see Noè (2001).
[97] OLD, *sv. 'vetus'* (belonging to or existing in the past, belonging to a past age, old fashions or practices, bygone events). Cf. White (2013): 49.

Such reasoning does not, however, explain the decision to write in verse and not prose; and so Columella also sets out the context for this particular composition choice. It seems that, originally, he had set out to continue with Book 10 in the same manner as the previous nine books, but it was 'at the constant demand' of his patron, Silvinus, that he changed from writing in prose to verse (*isque, sicut institueram, prosa oratione prioribus subnecteretur exordiis, nisi propositum meum expugnasset frequens postulatio tua*, pr. 3).[98] The patron's insistence on verse composition is then explicitly tied to a literary predecessor, when Columella states that he has been instructed by Silvinus to pay homage to Virgil by finishing 'in poetic measures the missing part of the *Georgics*' (*ut poeticis numeris explerem georgici carminis omissas partes*, pr. 3). He then makes it clear that this 'missing' garden poem is a part of the *Georgics* that 'even Virgil himself expressly stated' was to be 'left to posterity' (*quas tamen et ipse Vergilius significaverat posteris se memorandas relinquere*, pr. 3).

This particular statement is, of course, a reference to lines 4.147-8 of the *Georgics*, with Columella's *memorandas relinquit* directly echoing Virgil's *memoranda relinquo*. I discussed in part one how Virgil positions his *garden excursus* within a process of bequeathal, inheritance, and cultivation in order to reflect the natural cyclical patterns of growth and decay within the garden itself, but also to negate his supposed non-treatment of the space by passing it on to future poets; and it appears that Columella is more than willing to fill in the apparent gap in the literary market left by Virgil.[99] In fact, he believes he has the express blessing of Virgil to take up this task:[100]

> *Neque enim aliter istud nobis fuerat audendum, quam ex voluntate vatis maxime venerandi…*
>
> For I would not have dared such a thing except by the will of the most honourable poet…

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[98] Silvinus' insistence on verse-writing is also noted at 9.16.2 (see n. 93, above), and at 11.1.2: *Sed tibi, Publi Silvine, pertinacitor expetenti versificationis nostrae gustum, negare non sustinebam*/ But when you, Publius Silvinus, persisitently demanded a taste of my verse-writing, I could not bring myself to refuse.
The poeticism of Columella's garden (*poeticis numeris*) is further reiterated in the garden poem proper by the phrase *numerosus hortus*, translated by Henderson (2002a), 126, as 'garden symphony'. *Numerus* can be used to denote metrical verse; and, although its primary meaning is 'consisting in, or containing, many units or individuals', *numerosus* can also be translated as 'harmonious' or 'rhythmical' (OLD, *sv. 'numerus', 'numerosus'*). Taking the references from pr.3 and 10.6 together, Columella thus suggests his garden will be poetic in a technical sense, but also flourishing and abundant.

[99] Virgil's treatment, or lack of treatment, on gardens may also be reference in Columella's earlier statements in pr. 1, where he argues that gardening has been 'neglected by farmers'. This reference to neglect may also hint at the lack of interest in gardens by agricultural writers in the past (cf. n.19, above).

[100] Col. 10. pr. 3.

Virgil bequeathed his 'garden' to his literary successors, his 'inheritors', at *Georgics* 4.147-8, in order that they might 'cultivate' it for future generations; and Columella, as the self-appointed heir, argues in the preface that the time for that continued cultivation is now, not just because of the demands of his patron, but also because of the supposed need resulting from the contemporary cultural climate.[101]

Book 10, then, is meant to be viewed, according to Columella at least, as the fifth *Georgic* that never was – a bold claim, perhaps, to be filling in what Virgil 'left out', but not an entirely surprising move when we consider how Columella prepares his readers for it during the build up to Book 10.[102] Books 1-9 of *De Re Rustica* deal with the same general topics as treated by Virgil in the *Georgics*, and also in the same order: crops (books 1-2), vines (books 3-5), cattle (books 6-8), and bees (book 9). The proem of the garden verse (lines 1-5) also re-emphasises this ordering of topics and the connection to Virgil:

> *Hortorum quoque te cultus, Silvine, docebo,*
> *atque ea, quae quondam spatiis exclusus iniquis,*
> *cum caneret laetas segetes et munera Bacchi,*
> *et te, magna Pales, necnon caelestia mella,*
> *Vergilius nobis post se memoranda reliquit.*
>
> The cultivation of gardens I will now teach, Silvinus,
> And those themes which Virgil once left behind to be recounted by us,
> when, enclosed by narrow bounds,
> he sang of flourishing crops and Bacchus' gifts,
> and you great Pales, and heavenly honey.
> .

The placement of Book 10 after a discussion of apiculture is an obvious nod to Virgil. Both Boldrer and Saint-Denis have pointed out that Columella could have logically dealt with gardens in or immediately after Books 1-5 because they deal with crops and soil, therefore offering a thematic connection to gardening;[103] but, instead, he chooses to exploit the connection between bees and gardens as set out by Virgil, in that gardens offer a way to

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[101] It is also of interest that Columella appears to have been old when he wrote his treatise. At the end of Book 12 (12.59.5), he says that 'nature does not teach the grey-haired everything' (*nec tamen canis natura dedit cunctarum rerum prudentiam*) – cf. Ash (1930), xiv. If we refer back to Virgil's space-time framework, it is the old age of the man that allows him the time to garden in Tarentum; and, although Columella is not explicit in Book 10 about his age, the fact that he appears to be old and that he also dedicates part of his time to writing at length on gardens should not go unnoticed.

[102] Henderson (2004): 13, calls Book 10 'a fifth Georgic from start to finish'; cf. Spencer (2010), 95, who points out that Book 10 also 'dips into the aesthetics of the *Eclogues*' pastoral world and shows cumulatively how the garden as microcosm of the city-state converses with the nature of Rome'.

[103] See Boldrer (1996), 13; and Saint-Denis (1969), 8.

provide flowers to support the bees with nectar and thus keep them safe and discourage them from wandering off.[104] Although Book 10 may not be positioned at the most obvious place within the *De Re Rustica*, by mimicking the placement of the *Georgics* gardening episode, Columella has 'left his readers agog for Virgilian flights of fancy' by ending Book 9 with bees.[105]

Thus, as White notes, through the overall arrangement of *De Re Rustica* as a kind of reflection of the *Georgics*, by evoking the connection between bees and gardening as suggested by Virgil in *Georgics* 4, and by a brief restatement of his poetic purpose and of the themes of the *Georgics* in his proem, Columella has prepared his readers for his 'completion' of the *Georgics* by his poetic gardening book.[106] Book 10, therefore, will not just be a recapitulation of the *Georgics*, but a reimagining of it. That the first nine books of his treatise appear to build up to this climactic 'fifth Georgic' also suggests that Silvinus' supposed demand for verse-writing is more of a front for Columella's personal motivation to emulate Virgil. The decision to write a garden poem, when viewed in the context of an entire reimagining of the *Georgics*, was surely not the result of some last minute pressure but, rather, a carefully managed and deliberate decision by Columella.

To recap, the motivations for writing Book 10 appear, on the surface, to be relatively straightforward. Columella, as an agricultural writer, will include in his treatise a discussion of gardening, a topic that has been recognised as part of agriculture in various degrees by previous writers. His discussion, however, will stand out in two ways: first, in comparison to the 'neglect' of previous farmers (or writers), Columella's discussion will be of a considerable and notable length; and, second, in comparison to the rest of his treatise, the garden discussion will stand alone as a verse book, surrounded by prose. Why these two changes? Columella would have us believe that gardening is of greater concern to his contemporary audience compared to that of previous agricultural writers; and that his patron requested verse writing specifically so that he would create the 'missing' fifth Georgic of Virgil. On reflection, though, these two factors appear to be more of a front for Columella's own belief that he has a debt to literature, so to speak, to provide what Virgil could not and, therefore, emulate Virgil's poetic status.

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[104] White (2013), 32-3, notes that Columella additionally prepares the readers for his poetic gardening book by briefly discussing in Book 9 the sorts of flowers favoured by bees (9.4.4); by relating a myth concerning the origin of bees (9.2.2-3), which recalls Virgil's *bougonia* myth (*G.* 4.281-314, 548-58); and by illustrating his discussion of apiculture with appropriate quotes from *Georgics* Book 4 (e.g. 9.8.13; 9.9.4; 9.9.6; 9.10.2).
[105] Spencer (2010): 94.
[106] White (2013): 35.

These co-existing motivations combine to suggest that the *hortus* now has value, both in contemporary agriculture and as a literary subject; and this, in turn, suggests that the somewhat marginalised position of the *hortus* in the *Georgics* is no longer a true reflection of the *hortus*' standing in cultural thought. However, if we take a look at the specific language Columella uses to describe Book 10, as opposed to this surrounding contextual information, the issue of the garden's perceived place within society and, more specifically, within agriculture once again becomes far less clear-cut.

The 'Place' of the *Hortus*

When Columella presents Book 10 as his 'final payment' to Silvinus, some key words stand out. First, he describes the payment as *pensiuncula* ('a tiny payment', pr.1): not attested to before Columella, this is a diminutive of *pensio*; and, taken together with *particula* (pr.4), it suggests that the subject of gardening (i.e. the payment) should be viewed as 'small', or even 'meagre'.[107] The emphasis on the size of the payment is then reiterated when Columella describes the individual topics, or 'limbs' (*membra*, pr.4), within gardening as 'slender' (*exigua*, pr.4);[108] and throughout Book 10 there is a continued emphasis on narrow and ordered elements: 'let him mark out a fine path' (*parvo*, 10.93), 'soil combed with clear markings' (*pectita*, 10.94), 'closely marked furrows' (*parvo*, 10.230).[109]

Columella continues to downplay the garden by apologising for its lack of substance: he says it 'cannot be the object of attention' (*nullo modo conspici*, pr.4), and it 'cannot be viewed as a topic within its own limits' (*quasi suis finibus terminata*) because those 'slender (*tenuem*) limbs' are, in fact, so 'imperceptible' (*incomprehensibili parvitate*) that, even put together, they will amount to nothing. The use of *tenuis* here has an obvious programmatic function, in that it indicates Columella's desire for the concise, well-wrought verse favoured by Hellenistic poets and their imitators;[110] and this alignment with 'finely spun Callimachean poetry' is reemphasised in the garden poem when Columella asks the Muses to 'spin him a

[107] Boldrer (1996): 95. *Particula* is attested to before Columella, e.g. Cic. *de Orat.* 1.179; Hor. *S.* 2.2.79. Columella also uses it elsewhere at, e.g. 1.2.1, and 11.2.39.
[108] Cf. Virgil, *G.* 1.67-70, for the collocation of *tenuis* and *exigua*, used here to describe the slightness of the furrow and the meagerness of the water. White (2013), 101, argues that Columella emphasises the limits of his material at pr.4 by recalling Virgil, thus aligning the scantiness of his subject matter with Virgil's unproductive plot.
[109] Gowers (2000): 147, n. 55, sees all these 'fine' distinctions as a further homage to Virgil - cf. *A.* 3.685 (*leti discrimine parvo*, 'a hair's breadth from death'); 9.143 (*leti discrimina parva*); 10.511 (*tenui discrimine leti*).
[110] White (2013): 101. On *tenuis* as the equivalent of Callimachus' λεπτός, see Clausen (1987), 3 and 125, n.6.

slender song' (*tenui deducite carmine*, 10.40).[111] However, any notion that this sort of concise verse should be viewed positively is immediately undermined by the use of the metaphor 'you can't make a rope out of grains of sand' – perhaps Columella is suggesting that, no matter how much he writes about gardens, the topic just cannot amount to anything substantial on its own.

Columella's insistence on the smallness or meagreness of gardening is, of course, nothing new. The pseudo-Virgilian *Moretum* similarly uses a variety of specific terms to denote smallness or scantiness when referring to the *hortus* of its protagonist Simulus: littered throughout this poem are terms such as *exiguus* (3, 62, 89, 112), *vilis* (5), *parvulus* (8), *pauper* (16, 63, 64), *paucus* (60), *redivivus* (61), and *contractus* (77). Furthermore, as noted in part one in the discussion of the *Georgics*' gardening *excursus*, agricultural writers expressed the 'lowliness' of the *hortus* through the lack of time dedicated to writing about the subject; and this lack of treatment was a direct reflection of the allocation of time to the task of gardening in the real world. This attitude towards the space culminated in descriptions of the *hortus* as a 'poor man's farm', and the idea that writing about gardens was 'helpful' but, ultimately, rather 'trivial'.[112] Columella, then, through the use of specific terminology, echoes the notion that gardens and gardening as a literary topic are 'paltry and devoid of substance'.[113]

So, despite Columella's claims at the beginning of the preface that gardening deserves to, or indeed *must*, be discussed more thoroughly than before, he paradoxically continues to describe the space with the same terminology of meagreness as other writers. On the one hand, we are meant to view the stand-out verse experiment as so substantial that it will 'complete' the *Georgics* by filling in its 'missing' piece; but, on the other hand, we are faced with the overwhelming sense that, within the context of Columella's own treatise, it remains a small and almost inconsequential part. The supposed cultural obligation to write at length on gardens does not appear to be matched by the cultural opinion of said gardens, and so the literary relevance of Book 10 is at odds with the continued lowly status of its subject matter. In fact, at the end of the preface (pr.5), Columella worries that his verse book will reflect badly on the rest of his treatise:

> *Quare quidquid est istud, quod elucubravimus, adeo propriam sibi laudem non vindicat, ut boni consulat, si non sit dedecori prius editis a me scriptorum monumentis. Sed iam praefari desinamus.*

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[111] Gowers (2000): 135. Also note the reference at Col. 10.227 to the 'slender thread of verse' (*gracili…filo*).
[112] Plin. *Nat.* 19.19.52 (*hortus ager pauperis erat*); 20.1.2 (*tantum venia sit a minimus sed a salutaribus ordienti primumque ab hortensiis*).
[113] Gowers (2000): 133.

> For this reason, whatever this is which I have composed by burning the midnight oil, it is so far from claiming the praise appropriate to it that I would take it as a good sign if it does not reflect badly on my earlier works. But let me now put an end to the preface.

It seems the *hortus* cannot escape its status as 'common fare', however much you aim to write about it.

Why, though, is this the case? The key here is the garden's position in relation to agriculture and, more specifically, how we are forced to focalise our view of the garden from the vantage point of the entire agricultural world. Having discussed the space-time framework at work in the *Georgics*, it is now becoming even clearer that Columella remains bound by certain principles when attempting to define the garden's place within a broader agricultural network; but, also, that this act of definition is complicated further because Columella is attempting to articulate another parallel relationship to an earlier garden text at the same time. The complexities of these interconnected relationships are hinted at by a couple of key phrases. Firstly, it is important to return to the phrase *quasi suis finibus terminata* (pr.4): here, Columella is not just emphasising that the garden is small but, more crucially, that it is so small that *it cannot constitute a subject in itself*. The garden, apparently, *has* to be viewed in relation to something else (in this instance, agriculture); and so, although it may be bound by its own limits, these boundaries or limitations do not constitute a complete separation from that its broader network.

Secondly, the use of the word *faenoris* (pr.1) to denote the payment of Book 10 to Silvinus stands in contrast to the use of *reliqua…pars* at the end of Book 9 (9.16.2) to describe the coming verse book. *Faenus* generally denotes 'interest received on capital lent out', whereas *reliqua* refers to something remaining, perhaps even expected.[114] So is Book 10 the last part-payment to Silvinus or an interest payment? The end of Book 9 presents Book 10 as an expected and, originally, final part of the entire treatise, but *faenus* suggests it is more of an additional element to the text. The notion of Book 10 as a 'bonus' is further articulated through the use of a weaving metaphor (pr.3) in Columella's description of the reasoning behind his decision to write in verse and not prose:[115]

> *…prosa oratione prioribus* ***subnecteretur*** *exordiis, nisi propositum meum expugnasset frequens postulatio tua…*

[114] Compare OLD, *sv. 'faenus'* ('interest on capital, a debt carrying interest'); and *sv. 'reliquum'* ('a sum of money left owing, an amount in arrears, a balance to one's credit').
[115] Cf. Hor. *Ep.* 2.1.224-5, who complains that the labour that goes into poetry goes unnoticed. *Deducta* (225) in particular is used as a metaphor for the craft of spinning commonly applied to poetic consumption: see Brink (1982), 242.

> …would have been **tacked on** in prose to my opening books, if my purpose had not been defeated by your constant demand…

Gowers argues that the effect of this metaphor is the suggestion that the garden text is 'tacked on in subordinate fashion to the rest of the work', which, again, seems at odds with the idea that Silvinus demanded this book and that this demand was accepted by Columella, who produced Book 10 as a final and expected *reliqua* payment to his patron.[116]

Furthermore, it seems strange that Columella continues to use similar weaving metaphors to describe the writing and production process of the next instalment of the treatise, Book 11:[117]

> *...cum praedictam materiam carminis legibus* ***implicarem****.*
>
> …when I tried to **enfold** the said subject within the rules of verse.
>
> *...ut holitoris curam* ***subtexerem*** *villici officiis.*
>
> …to **weave** the gardener's work in with that of the baliff's duties.

We know that Book 11 is described as a 'bonus book' (*voluminum excessi*, 11.1.2), so it would be natural to use such weaving metaphors to denote the 'tacked on' relationship of that book to an already complete treatise; and this is emphasised by the reference to Book 10 as the original end point, the *reliqua…pars*, of the manuscript.[118] Why, though, would Columella also use a weaving metaphor at 10. pr. 3 to describe Book 10 itself? To describe a seemingly expected element of the treatise with similar vocabulary to a bonus element of that same treatise forces us to question the relationship of Book 10 to the rest of the *De Re Rustica* with more scrutiny. Is it possible for Book 10 to be simultaneously essential and also a bonus? The inclusion of words such as *faenoris* and *subnecteretur* in the preface of Book 10 force us to address this question.

The *Hortus* as Supplement

What, then, can we deduce from my analysis of Book 10's preface within the context of my broader concerns? In its functional role as a paratext, how does the preface guide or control our perception of the garden text and, more broadly, garden space itself? It is clear from my discussion that Columella frames his verse experiment in two different ways – as a

[116] Gowers (2000): 134.
[117] Col. 11. pr.1; 11. pr.2.
[118] Cf. n. 95, above.

response to Virgil, and as a part-payment towards the completion of his own manual – and it is the co-existence of these two relationships that creates such an intriguing dynamic between Book 10 and the rest of *De Re Rustica*.

Following my analysis, it appears that the small payment of Book 10 is both inside and outside of Columella's remit as an agricultural writer. It is as if *De Re Rustica* would be complete without it, but also incomplete in some way. Book 10 is portrayed as a substantial necessity from the perspective of its relationship to Virgil, but also a small extra in relation to the rest of *De Re Rustica*: it relates to it, but it is on the edge (literally, if we believe it to be the original ending), and it is perceived as having a secondary or lesser importance to the previous nine books. Similarly, and as discussed in part one of this chapter in detail, the *hortus* itself, as a physical space, although clearly productive, is categorised as a side-line, an off-shoot, of a more dignified and 'useful' agricultural world. Nowhere is it suggested explicitly that gardening does not belong as part of agriculture, but the value of this part does not appear to be highly prioritised. Even when the subject matter of gardening is treated at considerable length, as it is by Columella, it still continues to be marginalised and bound by its supposed lowly status.

The 'smallness' of gardening thus appears to be a contributing factor as to why agricultural writers pre-Columella, including Virgil, avoided any thorough discussion of the topic. The lack of literary treatment is a reflection of a meagre view of the *hortus* and, consequently, of gardening as a literary topic. On the surface, Columella appears to be breaking with tradition by including a 436-hexameter verse book on gardening in his otherwise prose treatise; but despite the stand out nature of this verse book, and his desire to fill in the missing part of the *Georgics*, Columella continues to be bound by a framework of terminology that emphasises the garden's, and garden text's, insignificance compared to other elements of agriculture.

Returning to my initial characterisation of the prose preface as a paratext, then, it appears that this textual tool not only controls our reading of *the* text (i.e. Book 10); but, by articulating the intriguing dynamic between Book 10 and the rest of *De Re Rustica*, both of which must be read in relation to Virgil's *Georgics*, the preface also informs us, by implication, of the relationship between gardens and agriculture. The positioning of Book 10 as both 'inside' the treatise, in that it is an expected payment to Silvinus, and yet also 'outside' the traditional remit of an agricultural writer, in that it goes above and beyond the norm as a 'bonus', reveals the continuity of the ambiguous and often paradoxical relationship between garden space and agricultural space first established by Virgil in the *Georgics*. In fact, the concept of the paratext, as both part of and not part of a text, turns out to be a very

useful metaphor for that ambiguity – in agricultural texts and the real agricultural world, the garden belongs without really belonging.

In light of these observations, I would like to end this chapter by introducing Derrida's concept of the supplement – the 'critical idiom with which he describes the paradoxical nature of an extra element added to something that is supposed to be complete' – as a means of articulating this paradoxical garden-agriculture relationship.[119] A supplement is defined as something that, allegedly secondary, comes to serve as an aid to something 'original' or 'natural', but this definition is ambiguous because it can be interpreted in two ways: first, that the 'natural' is lacking something and requires completion; or, second, that the supplement merely enriches the 'natural' as an 'add-on'.[120] A supplement to a dictionary, for example, is an extra section that is added on, but the possibility of adding that very supplement indicates that the dictionary itself is incomplete.[121]

Derrida uses the concept of the supplement as a deconstructive tool to show that what is claimed to be full can also be shown to be lacking, in that supplements can either be viewed as substitution or completion. As Reynolds has argued, we must recognise that Derrida's discussion reveals that there is a 'constitutive undecidability involved in the notion of the supplement'; and what is noticeable in his chosen examples is an 'ambiguity that ensures that what is supplementary can be interpreted in two ways'.[122] In fact, Derrida himself states that it is 'undecidable' whether the supplement adds itself and is a 'plenitude enriching a plenitude, the fullest measure of presence', or whether the supplement 'supplements…adds only to replace…represents and makes an image…its place…assigned in the structure by the mark of emphasis'.[123] Such a conflicting double-bind has thus led Culler to define the supplement as an 'inessential extra, added to something complete in itself' but 'added in order to complete, to compensate for a lack in what was supposed to be complete in itself'.[124]

The paradox of the supplement is thus also the paradox of Book 10. Columella's verse experiment exposes past agricultural texts as lacking, in that they neglected a thorough

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[119] I borrow this description of the supplement from Jansen (2014), 265, in her discussion of book covers as paratexts. Derrida's formulation of the supplement can be found in his 1976 work *On Grammatology*. On the supplement in Derrida, see, for example, Gaston and Maclachlan (2001), 119-128; Culler (1982), 102-6, 166-70, 193-9; *ibid.* (2001), 9-13; and Reynolds (2004), 47-8. For an annotated primary and secondary bibliography, see Schultz and Fried (1992); and for a summary of Derridean terms, see Lucy (2004), and Wortham (2010).
[120] Reynolds (2004): 47.
[121] See Culler (1982), 107, who notes Webster's definition of the supplement as 'something that makes an addition or completes'. Cf. the French *suppléer,* which can mean 'to add what is missing' or 'to supply a necessary surplus'. The link between supplement and substitute is evident in the two terms 'supply teacher' (UK) and 'substitute teacher' (US), both denoting the same teaching appointment.
[122] Reynolds (2004): 47.
[123] Derrida (1976): 144-5.
[124] Culler (1982): 103.

treatment of gardening, and therefore are requiring completion through the inclusion of a garden text; and yet, his description also maintains that the very thing designed to complete is, in itself, still a 'small bonus', situated outside or, at the very least, on the edge of the agricultural sphere. Book 10 is both a supplement in that it fills in something lacking elsewhere, and also a supplement in that it merely enriches something already whole, of which it is a part. The two sides of supplementation are expressed through the two relationships of which Book 10 is a part of: first, with Virgil, and, second, with the rest of *De Re Rustica*. Book 10 is presented as so substantial that it can 'complete' the *Georgics*, but it remains bound by a framework of marginality that presupposes the notion of the *hortus* as secondary to agriculture in some way – the garden continues to be sub-*Georgic*, even when it breaks out of its original *Georgic* context. The two co-existing relationships Book 10 participates in thus exemplify the two determinate possibilities involved in the 'undecidability' of the supplement – Book 10 has the potential to be simultaneously 'added in order to complete' and also an 'inessential extra'.

Furthermore, as well as demonstrating the supplement's undecidability, our two garden texts also showcase how the supplement has the potential to destabilize traditional hierarchical relationships.[125] The space-time framework at play in Virgil's gardening *excursus* represents the garden-agriculture relationship as one that can be perceived in terms of hierarchical difference – the garden (the supplement) is always evaluated with significance in relation to agriculture (the 'true presence'). This hierarchical structure creates and feeds the perception that the garden is secondary; that it should be treated as lowly; that any thorough treatment is surely only a bonus or a nice-to-have; and, at the most extreme level, that it should be exteriorised or shut out completely. It is for this reason that Columella, despite his grandstanding on the scale of Book 10, continues to promote the same lowly perception of the *hortus* through the application of pointed terminology.

This hierarchical understanding, in turn, seemingly links the 'undecidable' aspects of supplementation in a 'powerful logic' wherein both meanings of the supplement are presented as 'exterior or foreign' to the 'essential nature' of what which it is added to or in which it is substituted.[126] My discussion in this chapter, however, has highlighted that the garden is never simply outside nor inside agriculture, and can actually be both inside and outside at the same time. It forms part of agriculture without really being part, and it belongs without really belonging. Both Virgil and Columella challenge a straightforward exteriority of the

[125] The hierarchical understanding of the supplements can be seen in the writings of Jean Jacques-Rousseau, who establishes a system of hierarchy between two sets of concepts, where some (such as 'nature' and 'speech') are seen as central or 'original', whereas others (such as 'education' or 'writing') are marginalized. Cf. Culler (1982), 103-4, on Rousseau and Derrida.
[126] Culler (1982): 103.

supplement by promoting the supposedly marginal to a position of centrality, albeit in different ways: Virgil, despite his insistence that he has no time for it, actually draws our attention to the garden space through the obvious separation of the garden text from the rest of the narrative and the tantalising tease of a supposed non-event; and Columella, in his self-appointed status as Virgil's heir, goes out of his way to make his gardening book the stand-out verse book in his otherwise prose work.

This sort of concentration on the apparently marginal, the bringing of the exterior 'in' to focus, puts the logic of supplementarity to work as an interpretive strategy, as Culler explains:[127]

> *Interpretation generally relies on distinctions between the central and the marginal, the essential and the inessential: to interpret is to discover what is central to a text or a group of texts. On the one hand, the marginal graft works within these terms to reverse a hierarchy, to show that what had previously been thought marginal is in fact central. But on the other hand, that reversal, that attributing importance to the marginal, is usually conducted in such a way that it does not simply lead to the identification of a new centre…but a subversion of the distinctions essential and inessential, inside and outside.*

In essence, the stand-out nature of Book 10, created by the change from prose to verse, and Columella's claims of 'completing' the *Georgics*, is not necessarily designed to drastically alter our perception of the *hortus* in itself. What Book 10 does do, instead, is subvert the distinction between what is essential and inessential, what is internal and external, within agriculture as a whole; and this destabilises the traditional hierarchical discourse in which the *hortus* is always perceived in relation to something else, rather than as an entity in its own right. Thus, the framing of Book 10 as a supplement reveals the *hortus* to be both central and marginal, depending on one's perspective, and ultimately raises the question of what it means if the marginal becomes central, and vice-versa.

Both Virgil and Columella, then, inform us on the relationship between the garden (as *hortus*) and the broader agricultural network it is situated in. Through their deliberate and specific construction of their gardens-as-texts, they articulate a set of cultural perceptions regarding the status of the space in Roman thought, and demonstrate how we cannot simply

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[127] Culler (1982): 140. The reference to 'graft' here refers to Derrida's idea of grafting – the process of inserting something alien into a pre-existing host. For an explanation of 'graft' in this context, see Wortham (2010), 69.

draw a definitive boundary line between garden space and agricultural space. What happens, though, when the garden transforms and moves beyond this 'original' agricultural context? If it is no longer bound within an agricultural network, does its supplementary status change? And do other, different manifestations and representations of garden space continue to be guided by and understood within the cultural frameworks of their creators, as my analysis in this chapter has suggested? With these questions in mind, it is time to turn to two case studies that demonstrate how gardens can move beyond their supposedly marginal status and, more specifically, how garden imagery can become absolutely central to image-making more broadly within the Augustan period. In this way, chapter four will continue to analyse the ways in which boundaries are constructed, represented, and contested as part of specific garden sites; but, rather than focus on how these relate to general cultural concepts, I will instead consider how these boundaries are crucial to promoting the specific ideological structures of a new political regime.

Chapter Four

Augustus' Garden Room? Re-framing the *Ara Pacis*.

When Strabo describes his visit to Rome during the Augustan period, he appears immediately struck by the novel combination of monumental architecture and nature within the city as a whole and, more specifically, within the Campus Martius:[1]

> τούτων δὲ τὰ πλεῖστα ὁ Μάρτιος ἔχει κάμπος, πρὸς τῇ φύσει προσλαβὼν καὶ τὸν ἐκ τῆς προνοίας κόσμον. καὶ γὰρ τὸ μέγεθος τοῦ πεδίου θαυμαστόν, ἅμα καὶ τὰς ἁρματοδρομίας καὶ τὴν ἄλλην ἱππασίαν ἀκώλυτον παρέχον τῷ τοσούτῳ πλήθει τῶν σφαίρᾳ καὶ κρίκῳ καὶ παλαίστρᾳ γυμναζομένων· καὶ τὰ περικείμενα ἔργα καὶ τὸ ἔδαφος ποάζον δι᾽ ἔτους καὶ τῶν λόφων στεφάναι τῶν ὑπὲρ τοῦ ποταμοῦ μέχρι τοῦ ῥείθρου σκηνογραφικὴν ὄψιν ἐπιδεικνύμεναι δυσαπάλλακτον παρέχουσι τὴν θέαν.
>
> The Campus Martius contains most of these [buildings], and thus, in addition to its natural beauty, it has received still further adornment as the result of foresight. Indeed, the size of the Campus is remarkable, since it affords space at the same time and without interference, not only for the chariot-races and every other equestrian exercise, but also for all that multitude of people who exercise themselves by ball-playing, hoop-trundling, and wrestling; and the works of art situated around the Campus Martius, and the ground, which is covered with grass throughout the year, and the crowns of those hills that are above the river and extend as far as its bed, which present to the eye the appearance of a stage-painting—all this, I say, affords a spectacle that one can hardly draw away from.

As Duret and Néraudau have noted, Strabo is clearly seduced by the successful dialogue between nature and art within the Campus Martius (*c'est le dialogue réussi entre la nature et l'art*) and the ways in which the monuments are inscribed into the landscape without spoiling its beauty. What Strabo describes is, in essence, a large-scale garden (*un jardin qui nous est décrit*), where art, men, and gods meet in total harmony (*une totale harmonie, par l'intercession de l'art, les hommes, et les dieux*).[2]

It is unsurprising that these features struck such a chord with the geographical commentator, since the Campus Martius was a focal point for the deliberate green-scaping of

[1] Strabo, *Geog.* 5.3.8, transl. Jones (1923).
[2] Duret and Néraudau (2001): 330. Cf. Laurence (1993) on Rome's 'ritual landscape'.

Rome during the Principate [see Fig. 3.1].[3] In contrast to the monumentality of Pompey's theatre/portico complex and Caesar's planned *Saepta Iulia*, Augustus chose to aggrandise the Campus Martius not just by building but, rather, by opening areas up to create a new kind of 'semi-urban zone of recreational, sacred, and dynastic buildings together with open fields, gardens, and woodlands'.[4] The creation of this new sacral-idyllic landscape park led Strabo to describe the space as 'the holiest of all' (ἱεροπρεπέστατον), and he deemed it an appropriate location for the tombs of Rome's most illustrious men and women. The most noteworthy tomb was, of course, the Mausoleum of Augustus, surrounded by a large grove (μέγα ἄλσος) and planted thickly up to the summit with trees.[5] Even the exterior decoration of the monument itself alluded to the surrounding greenery, with fragments of marble blocks carved in relief with laurel branches and leaves creating the impression that the walls flanking the doorway were sculpted with a pair of laurel trees.[6]

To complement and enhance this zone, Augustus also made large amounts of green space throughout the city either completely public or, at the very least, made available to the public:[7] his own garden and residence on the Palatine, the *Horti Pompeiani*, the *Horti Maecenatis*, the *Porticus Liviae* on the Oppian Hill, and the new grove (the *nemus Caesarum*) dedicated to his grandsons, Gaius and Lucius (on land previously designated for the

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[3] For the development of the Campus Martius during the Late Republican and Augustan periods, see Favro (1996); Wiseman (1996); Haselberger and Romano (2002): 74-7; Jacobs and Conlin (2014); and Bodel (2018), 218-221.

[4] Bodel (2018): 218-9. Cf. Spencer (2010): 155; Zanker (1988), 41, who characterizes the Campus Martius as a 'huge recreational ground'; and Haselberger and Romano (2002), 77, who refer to it as a 'sacro-idyllic landscape intertwined with grandiose structures for public spectacles'. Augustus' opening up of the Campus Martius taps into its deep-rooted tradition of commonality - Livy 2.5.2 notes that the Campus was land that belonged to Tarquinius Superbus, but, after his expulsion, it was granted to the Roman people as *ager publicus*.

[5] Strabo 5.3.8: διόπερ ἱεροπρεπέστατον νομίσαντες τοῦτον τὸν τόπον καὶ τὰ τῶν ἐπιφανεστάτων μνήματα ἐνταῦθα κατεσκεύασαν ἀνδρῶν καὶ γυναικῶν. ἀξιολογώτατον δὲ τὸ Μαυσώλειον καλούμενον, ἐπὶ κρηπῖδος ὑψηλῆς λευκολίθου πρὸς τῷ ποταμῷ χῶμα μέγα, ἄχρι κορυφῆς τοῖς ἀειθαλέσι τῶν δένδρων συνηρεφές· ἐπ᾽ ἄκρῳ μὲν οὖν εἰκών ἐστι χαλκῆ τοῦ Σεβαστοῦ Καίσαρος, ὑπὸ δὲ τῷ χώματι θῆκαί εἰσιν αὐτοῦ καὶ τῶν συγγενῶν καὶ οἰκείων, ὄπισθεν δὲ μέγα ἄλσος περιπάτους θαυμαστοὺς ἔχον· ἐν μέσῳ δὲ τῷ πεδίῳ ὁ τῆς καύστρας αὐτοῦ περίβολος, καὶ οὗτος λίθου λευκοῦ, κύκλῳ μὲν περικείμενον ἔχων σιδηροῦν περίφραγμα, ἐντὸς δ᾽ αἰγείροις κατάφυτος.
Cf. Suet. *Aug.* 100.4, who describes the surrounding landscape of the Mausoleum as planted with trees and surrounded by walkways which were available for public use. On the Mausoleum and its grove, see Rehak (2006), 35-60; Hesberg and Panciera (1994), 35-6, 54-6; Bodel (2018), 220; Purcell (1987a); Wiseman (1979); and Duret and Néraudau (2001), 240, 330.

[6] Rehak (2006): 39.

[7] This, in turn, directly continued the trend of public benefaction of green space begun under Julius Caesar, who inaugurated his *horti* by inviting the *plebs urbana* to feast there, and, subsequently, left the entire grounds to the Roman people in his will (Suet. *Caes.* 83). However, we should note the immediacy of Augustus' public benefaction in contrast to Caesar's – Augustus did not wait to do this posthumously, instead using green space to secure public support for his regime right from the beginning. According to Favro (1996), 178, Augustus also provided both the means and the incentive for the creation of these sorts of public gardens. The expansion and overhauling of the city's aqueduct system in the 30s BC led to an increased volume and distribution of water throughout Rome, enabling the city to 'burst into bloom'.

Transtiber *Horti Caesarum*) are all examples of this trend.[8] Augustus, then, clearly realised the importance of providing public space to the Romans within the city. As Von Stackelberg points out, for the majority of Romans in the city, 'any experience of a garden was limited to small urban or suburban plots or to a collection of potted plants', and so, their admittance to this public green space 'promoted an atmosphere of social inclusion that generated political goodwill'.[9] These new and 'open' garden spaces provided Rome's residents with an escape from their crowded living conditions and positively transformed the cityscape.[10]

A Botanic Mythology

The injection of green space into Augustan Rome appears to have been a particularly powerful tool in the promotion of his regime for two reasons.[11] First, this approach seemed to find a happy medium between the two diametrically opposed views of garden space that took hold during the Late Republic: these garden spaces were neither the luxurious *horti* of past elites that had elicited such negative moral invective from the ancient authors, nor were they the 'lowly' vegetable plot, that 'lesser' supplement to the agricultural world. Furthermore, by changing the emphasis from private *luxuria* to public benefaction, Augustus' green spaces became an apt symbol of his claims to be the sole provider and savior of the Roman people. Augustus was to be seen as an ideal citizen, a shepherd herding the Romans into the new Golden Age; and these ideas complemented the traditional agrarian and pastoral associations of the garden to create a message of political renewal based on the language and imagery of cultivation.[12]

Second, Augustus' green-scaping of Rome also aligned generally with his revitalisation of traditional Roman religious practices and his focus on restoring *pietas* and 'old' Roman morality.[13] Key to this was to counteract the supposed disappearance of traditional sacred sites, the loss of which was noted by several ancient authors from the Late Republican and Augustan periods: Propertius, for example, claimed that shrines lay neglected

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[8] On the addition of the *nemus Caesarum*, see Tac. *Ann.* 15.15; Suet. *Aug.* 43.1; and Dio 66.25.3.
[9] Von Stackelberg (2009): 76.
[10] Hor. *S.* 1.8.14-16, for example, comments on the positive transformation of the city in his description of the new Gardens of Maecenas, which were previously an old graveyard.
[11] Cf. Kellum (1994b), who argues that the green space within Rome served as 'living units of meaning within the Augustan system of visual communication'.
[12] Von Stackelberg (2009): 89. Cf. Virg. *G.* 1.24-30, which casts Augustus as both a husbandman and a conqueror.
[13] On the 'fall' of Roman religion in the Republic, see Cic. *N.D.* 2.9; *Leg.* 2.33; and *Rep.* 5.1.2. For an overview of the religious 'continuity and change' during the Augustan period, see Galinsky (2007). Zanker (1988), 102-35, provides a good summary of the Augustan religious reforms, the revivals of the archaic festivals and rituals, and its link to visual iconography. In his *Res Gestae* (19-21) Augustus claims to have rebuilt or constructed eighty-two temples during his rule.

in 'deserted groves' and that piety was being vanquished;[14] Dionysius of Halicarnassus describes a 'far off holy place, arched over by a dense wood', said to be consecrated to Pan, that 'to be sure, no longer remains';[15] and Varro, who seemed to view sacred groves as a genuine expression of what little remained of the old Roman religion, laments at how the sites of previous sanctuaries have been replaced by narrow streets, and notes that all that remains of the sacred groves are the street-name reminders symbolising the trees which once stood there.[16] Thus, just as Augustus' public benefaction had directly counteracted the negativity of *luxuria*, the apparently conscious effort to transform the Campus Martius into a sacral-idyllic garden-like park also dealt directly with the Late Republican dismay at the disappearance of sacred landscapes.[17]

Underpinning this injection of green space was also a broader use of nature's symbols by the new emperor, a deliberate monopolisation of specific plant types in order to establish a botanic mythology for Augustus himself and his family.[18] This new mythology is best encapsulated in the familiar story of the omen of the *Gallina Alba*: soon after the marriage of Livia to Augustus, an eagle flew down and dropped a white hen with a sprig of laurel right into her lap. She was advised by the *haurispices* to preserve the hen and its offspring, and to plant the laurel as religious obligation. Accordingly, to mark the spot of this *miraculum*, Livia planted the sprig of laurel at her villa near the ninth milestone of the *via Flaminia* (*iuxta nonum lapidum Flaminiae viae*, Plin. *Nat.* 1.137), where it subsequently flourished into a

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[14] Prop. 3.13.47-8: *at nunc desertis cessant sacraria lucis/aurum omnes victa iam pietate colunt.*

[15] Dion. Hal. *Ant. Rom.* 1.79.8: καὶ ἦν γάρ τις οὐ πολὺ ἀπέχων ἐκεῖθεν ἱερὸς χῶρος ὕλῃ βαθείᾳ συνηρεφὴς καὶ πέτρα κοίλη πηγὰς ἐνιεῖσα, ἐλέγετο δὲ Πανὸς εἶναι τὸ νάπος, καὶ βωμὸς ἦν αὐτόθι τοῦ θεοῦ· εἰς τοῦτο τὸ χωρίον ἐλθοῦσα ἀποκρύπτεται. τὸ μὲν οὖν ἄλσος οὐκέτι διαμένει…

[16] Var. *L.* 5.152: *In <Aventi>no Lauretum ab eo quod ibi sepultus est Tatius rex, qui ab Laurentibus interfectus est, <aut> ab silva laurea, quod ea ibi excisa et aedificatus vicus: ut inter Sacram Viam et Macellum editum Corneta <a cornis>, quae abscisae loco reliquerunt nomen, ut Aesculetum ab aesculo dictum et Fagutal a fago, unde etiam Iovis Fagutalis, quod ibi sacellum.*
Cf. Bergmann (1992), 32, 41, who notes that warning inscriptions imploring passers-by to leave sacred sites alone intensified during the Late Republican/Early Empire periods as a wave of new building increasingly threatened ancient groves. For examples of such warnings, see *AP* 9.282; 9.312; 9.706.

[17] Cf. Brundrett (2011), 58-9, who argues that Augustus' adaptation of sacral landscapes combined elements of both the aristocratic *horti* and the sacred groves of the gods to suit his own needs. Flory (1989), 354, also notes that the spread of greenery and its Augustan associations was not limited to the city of Rome, since the emperor also founded cities surrounded by groves associated with his own name and worship: in Spain, for example, there was a *lucus Augusti*; and the city of Caesarea (founded by Augustus' childhood companion, Juba II) included a sacred laurel grove with an altar to Augustus. Strabo 7.7.6 also describes Augustus' creation of several new groves and accompanying shrines in Actium and Nicopolis.

[18] The Julio-Claudians were neither the first nor the last rulers of Rome to use the power of plants to express imperial power: Pliny the Elder (*Nat.* 19.169; cf. Livy 1.54) stresses that Tarquin the Proud cut the heads off his poppies as a metaphor intended to exhort his son to kill the chief men of the state; Pompey initiated the trend of parading trees as part of military triumphs (*Nat.* 12.20); and the balsam tree was paraded as a symbolic slave paying tribute to Rome as part of the triumph of Vespasian and Titus over the Jews (*Nat.* 12.111-3). On such 'botanizing rulers', see Totelin (2012); cf. Pollard (2009), who argues that the gardens of the Flavian's *Templum Pacis* are best understood as 'colonial botanical gardens… monumental statements of imperial power'.

dense grove (*tale vero lauretum,* Suet. *Gal.* 1; *mireque silva provenit*, Plin. *Nat.* 1.137).[19] From this particular grove, Augustus took branches for his triumphal crowns, a practice which continued for all emperors until just before the death of Nero, when the grove and the Julio-Claudian dynasty simultaneously withered away.[20]

This neat little anecdote, whether true or not, was important for Augustus for several reasons. At its most basic level, the story behind the setting of the laurel groves of the Caesars was extremely useful in providing an auspicious sign for what was surely a controversial marriage at the time. Literary evidence makes clear that Livia was pregnant at the time of this betrothal with her former husband's child;[21] and yet, since Livia's marriage to Augustus would remain childless, it was the very child she was carrying when the omen took place who would go on to become Rome's second emperor, Tiberius.

The laurel featured in this story was also the perfect plant choice for re-affirming Augustus' position as Julius Caesar's rightful heir. Caesar himself had used the laurel as his personal symbol as *triumphator*;[22] and so it was a natural choice for Augustus and his heirs to continue this tradition using the laurel from the auspicious grove. Even more significantly, the Julio-Claudian emperors would replant the branch they had cut off for their crown after use, allowing it to take root again and grow into bushes that were marked with the individual's name.[23] Thus, as Flory suggests, the grove formed a living family genealogy of the *triumphatores* of the *gens Iulia*; and the ability of the cut branch to take root and grow again became a symbol of the perpetual rebirth of Julius Caesar through his family.[24]

Furthermore, the laurel's significance was in no way limited to this one story. Indeed, so closely associated were Augustus and the plant that the depiction of the two laurel trees flanking his house served alone as symbol for him on coins.[25] In turn, these two particular

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[19] Although the ancients knew the site as '*ad Gallinas*', it is now referred to as the Villa at Prima Porta. The villa's ownership is commonly referred to as Livia's on the basis of the omen alone. Archaeologists tend to date the villa to between 30 and 25BC, although some suggest as early as 38BC - this dating fits nicely with the timing of the omen, since the day of the marriage of Livia and Augustus is noted in the *Fasti Verulani* (*Insc. Ital.* 13.2.160-1) as January 17th, and the year – 38BC – by Dio 48.44. For a more thorough discussion of the dating of the villa, see Gabriel (1955), 2-3; and Reeder (2001), 13-34.

[20] On the use of the laurel as part of a triumphal crown, see Plin. *Nat.* 15.127f.

[21] Tac. *Ann.* 5.1.2; Vell. 2.95.1; Dio 48.44; Suet. *Aug.* 62.2; *Tib.* 4.3.

[22] Julius Caesar was given the right to wear the laurel wreath (Dio 43.43.1); and the permanent laurel decoration on the *fasces* symbolized his perpetual right to triumph (Dio 44.44.3).

[23] Suet. *Gal.* 1; Plin. *Nat.* 15.137.

[24] Flory (1989): 345. On the ability of certain types of laurel to take root and regrow, see Plin. *Nat.* 17.62.

[25] For the symbol of the laurel on Augustan coins, see Kent (1978), pl. 40.143; and Fullerton (1985), 478-9. The significance of the laurel and its role in Augustan ideology is well attested and need not be treated in full here. My discussion in this chapter aims to provide a useful overview of the main points

laurel trees were themselves designed to recall the traditional use of the plant as a means of flanking religious buildings (like the Mausoleum);[26] and, as the Apolline symbol *par excellence*, the purifying and healing laurel was an extremely powerful visual device for establishing a link between the emperor and the divine. The crucial point here, then, is that the omen points to the potential of trees and plants as evocative visual stimuli which, in turn, create a public perception of a divine affinity between Augustus and tree. The importance of the omen, laurel, and the grove did not just lie in shaping the public opinion on the imperial marriage, but the imperial image as a whole.

It is against this backdrop that this chapter will analyse two garden-inspired artistic displays from the Augustan period in order to examine the centrality of botanic imagery to Augustan image-making at large, and to consider how the intersection of sacred space and green space at these sites helps us to explore the limits of what actually constitutes a 'garden' for the Romans of this period. My first example, the lower floral friezes of the *Ara Pacis*, is perhaps not an obvious choice in terms of a discussion on gardens (although it is certainly 'floral'); but the monument's location in the Campus Martius, coupled with its obvious sacred function, does suggest it has the potential to play a role in the establishment of the new sacral-idyllic Augustan cityscape as described by Strabo. In contrast, my second example, Livia's Garden Room, is not located in the Campus Martius, but it is far more obviously understood within the context of gardens and Augustus' botanic mythology. In fact, this room is located at the very same site as the omen of the *Gallina Alba*, in the underground apartments of the Villa of Livia.

Although these two examples have been recognised as similar before, due to their shared 'Augustan' botanical motifs, I seek to push this comparative analysis further by examining the ways in which boundaries are constructed, represented, and contested within each composition, and exploring how these boundaries, in turn, reflect the ideological principles promoted by the Augustan regime. More specifically, my analysis of the shared characteristics of hyperfertile abundance and contained profusion within the two compositions will reveal a complex balancing act, or perhaps even a deliberate collision, of supposed antitheses, with two types of co-existing temporal frameworks bound together in spaces that negotiate the boundary between discipline and excess. In doing so, I will demonstrate how the ambiguities of garden space, created by the fuzziness of its boundaries and its consequent

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of significance, and will complement more detailed surveys, such as Flory (1995). One of the best works on the symbolism and significance of laurel in the Greek and Roman world is still Ogle (1910).

[26] For evidence of the annual replacement of laurel boughs at the door of the house of the *flamines*, the Regia, the Curiae Veteres, and the Temple of Vesta, see Ov. *Fast.* 3.135f. Excavations of Augustus' Temple of Divus Iulius reveal a series of planters around the outer walls, root samples of which prove *laurus nobilis* once grew there – see Andreae (1957), 165, fig. 21.

interstitial nature, provide the perfect messaging vehicle for a new political regime that actively embraced ambivalence; and I will showcase how these two artistic displays contribute to the broader creation of a new Augustan, sacral-idyllic, cityscape in Rome. Finally, then, I will reframe the *Ara Pacis* as a monumental sacred grove (or *lucus*) within this newly created landscape – a concrete reminder of the Augustan message that transcended the transient nature of green space elsewhere in the city.

Before we move on to these more complex issues, though, with a detailed analysis of shared compositional characteristics, we must first take a step back and introduce both of the case studies. Since my focus is ultimately garden space, these reviews will be primarily focused on those elements directly concerned with nature; and, although my end goal is to demonstrate how these artistic displays participate in carefully constructed spatial relationships, I will begin by reviewing the visual elements of each site before moving the discussion forward.

The *Ara Pacis*

The *Ara Pacis* is a monumental sacred altar complex, originally commissioned in 13BC, in response to Augustus' military campaign victory, and finally consecrated in its location on the Campus Martius as a completed monument in 9BC.[27] The structure has a 3m tall central altar, standing on a 6x7m podium, and is enclosed by walls composed of large rectangular slabs (measuring c.11.6m from east to west, and c.10.5m from north to south). There are two entrances to the inner altar space, one on the east and one on the west, with a short flight of steps leading up to the (front) east side [see Figs. 3.2, 3.3].[28] The complex is not untypical in its layout or structure as a Roman temple. It may not possess an *aedes*, or house a statue of a particular deity, but it does fulfill the strictest definition of a *templum* in that it is a space set aside for religious purposes and determined by ritual as a place for taking in the *auspices*.[29]

The interior decoration of the precinct reaffirms the complex's sacred status [see Fig 3.4]. Here, we find the representation of traditional wooden panels carved into the marble,

[27] Two separate festivals commemorated these milestones: the *constitutio* on July 4th, commemorating the return of Augustus from his campaigns in 13BC, and the *dedicatio* on January 30th, commemorating the consecration of the finished monument in 9BC. The entire account of the January 30th ceremony can be found in Ov. *F.* 1.709-24. For the ceremony on July 4th, see *Insc. It.* XIII*,* 476 (July-December are not preserved in the *Fasti*).
[28] There are no steps to the rear west side due to the lower elevation on that side in its original position.
[29] Elsner (1991): 55. Cf. Egelhaaf-Gaiser (2007), 206, on the difference between *templum* (a 'ritually defined area') and *aedes sacra* (a 'temple building', as the seat of the gods). In the Greek, note τέμενος ('a piece of land cut off'), lexically bound to the verb τέμνω ('to cut').

above which 'hang' twelve garlands (two on each side of the frontal sides, and four suspended on each of the longer sides) depicting a broad array of vegetation – laurel, ivy, grapevine, pine, pomegranate, poppies, olives, figs, myrtle, pears, wheat, and nut-bearing trees. These garlands are fixed to the horns of dead cows (*bucrania*) with ribbons, and above each one is a sacrificial plate (*patera*) by means of which the *bucrania* are suspended [see Fig 3.5]. Research has indicated that such richly-fruited garlands originated in much the same way as they appear here on the *Ara Pacis*, as internal decoration on religious buildings, and that they were offered to the gods and goddesses as a generic expression of fertility.[30] The interior sculptural programme, then, clearly represents a translation into stone of the natural embellishments of altars;[31] and is an appropriate form of decoration to help mark the sanctity of the interior precinct.[32]

Despite the fundamental sacrificial purpose of the altar, though, the *Ara Pacis* complex is most frequently understood in political or, perhaps more accurately, 'Augustan' terms;[33] and scholars predominantly focus on the monument's so-called 'message'.[34] Indeed, the complex relationship between the establishment of 'monarchy', the transformation of society, and the creation of a new method of imperial visual communication during the age of Augustus is an important topic, and, unsurprisingly, it has been well examined over the years. Most notably, Paul Zanker's influential study on *The Power of Images in the Age of Augustus*

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[30] Castriota (1995), 31, n.88, in particular points to the garlands in relief on the altar of Pergamon, commissioned by Eumenes II and dedicated to 'all gods and goddesses', as a comparison. Rehak (2006), 104, notes that the *bucrania*/garland frieze motif originates no later than the third-century BC – it is especially common on small altars throughout the eastern Mediterranean, and, by the first-century BC, such friezes reached Italy. On the Roman assimilation of the garland motif in the Late Republican and Augustan periods, see Honroth (1971), 9-22; and von Hesberg (1981), 210-45.

[31] See Honroth (1971), 8; and von Hesberg (1981), 202-3. Jashemski (1979), 409, also notes that altars and *lararia* at Pompeii were frequently decorated with panted garlands.

[32] These motifs (*bucrania, paterae*, garlands) also occur in friezes decorating tombs (see von Hesberg (1981), pl.66.2, and Frischer (1982-3), pl.LXIII.1) and were eventually incorporated into Roman sarcophagi - see Herdejürgen (1996). Thus their funerary significance may also imply the eventual deification of Augustus, cf. Moretti (1948), 295. It should also be noted depictions of garlands were not limited to a religious context. They can also be found, for example, as painted decoration in the following locations contemporary with the *Ara Pacis*: the House of Livia on the Palatine (right-hand room); the House of Augustus (Room 6); and the House of P.Fannius Synister at Boscoreale (Room L). However, the function of the *Ara Pacis* does suggest the garlands on its inner walls were intended to mimic the 'real-life' counterparts as specifically altar decoration.

[33] Cf. Elsner (1991), and *id.* (1995: 192-210, who argues that one of the main weaknesses of scholarship on the *Ara Pacis* is the failure to emphasise sufficiently the sacrificial function of the altar proper. This weakness is viewed as particularly odd because of the huge significance of sacrifice for Romans as a means of defining their relation to the gods and establishing a hierarchy of social relations. On Roman sacrificial procedure, see e.g. Wissowa (1912), 409-32; Latte (1970), 379-93; and Elsner (1991), 53-4. On the significance of Roman sacrifice, see e.g. Gordon (1990), 201-55; Scheid (1984), 945-56; and *id.* (1985), 193-206.

[34] Rehak (2006), 103, argues that it is difficult to understand how the inner altar was used due to the impractical design - the limited interior space could not accommodate many people and the height of the enclosure would also cut off the view of the sacrifice from the outside. Thus, he suggests that the *Ara Pacis* could not have served as an altar 'in the traditional sense' but 'probably functioned more as a memorial' (to Augustus' return) or as 'a symbol' (of sacrificing to Peace).

has been central to the assumption of many scholars that a key aspect of the new 'monarchy' was a totalising 'visual language' that enabled a 'new mythology for Rome, and, for the emperor, a new ritual of power'.[35] Zanker's focus throughout his work is not so much on individual monuments but, rather, the totality of the visual imagery and the effect of this tapestry of images on the viewer.[36] The *Ara Pacis*, though, is repeatedly singled out as representative of the many aspects of this new 'communication', and it easy to see why.[37]

The importance of the altar complex to Augustus can be seen in the placement of its description in his very own *Res Gestae*:[38]

> *Cum ex Hispania Galliaque, rebus in his provincis prospere gestis, Romam redi Ti. Nerone P. Quintilio consulibus, aram Pacis Augustae senatus pro reditu meo consacrari censuit ad campum Martium, in qua magistratus et sacerdotes et virgines Vestales anniversarium sacrificium facere iussit.*
>
> When I returned to Rome from Spain and Gaul, having successfully accomplished matters in those provinces, when Tiberius Nero and Publius Quintilius were consuls, the senate voted to consecrate the altar of Augustan Peace in the Campus Martius for my return, on which it ordered the magistrates and priests and Vestal Virgins to offer annual sacrifices.

This description is significantly placed directly before Augustus' description of the closing of the gates of the Temple of Janus during his principate, thus linking the monument to the claim that the Augustan peace was the result of military victories that secured the *imperium Romanum* on land and sea:[39]

> *Ianum Quirinum, quem clausum esse maiores nostri voluerunt, cum per totum imperium populi Romani terra marique esset parta victoriis pax, cum prius, quam nascerer, a condita urbe bis omnino clausum fuisse prodatur memoriae, ter me principe senatus claudendum esse censuit.*

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[35] Zanker (1988): 3-4. First published in German in 1987, under the title *Augustus und die Macht der Bilder*. In this chapter, I reference the English translation.
[36] When Zanker talks of 'images', he is not just referring to 'works of art' but also buildings, poetic imagery, religious ritual, state ceremony, and the emperor's conduct and forms of social interaction.
[37] For the *Ara Pacis* as part of Augustus' visual communication in Zanker (1988), see e.g. pp.120-25 (on the link to the renewal of priesthoods and sacrifice); 158-60 (on the link to social legislation); 172-83 (on the link to the Golden Age); 216-7 (on the assimilation of Gaius and Lucius Caesar into the national mythology); and 285-88 (on the link between the Pax relief and the popularity of sacral-idyllic domestic wall painting).
[38] *RG* 12.2, trans. Shipley (1924).
[39] *RG* 12.3, transl. Shipley (1924). Rehak (2006), 134, notes that, for the Romans, 'peace' really meant 'pacification', the successful outcome of war against one's enemies.

> Janus Quirinus, which our ancestors ordered to be closed whenever there was peace, secured by victory, throughout the whole domain of the Roman people on land and sea, and which, before my birth is recorded to have been closed but twice in all since the foundation of the city, the senate ordered to be closed three times while I was *princeps*.

In fact, the *Ara Pacis'* form also closely resembles that of the Temple of Janus, the double opening on the east-west axis of the altar complex mirroring the two openings of the Temple;[40] and reproductions of these two sites have also been found on coins minted during the age of Nero, in AD 66, with each monument on opposing sides.[41] Augustus clearly took great pride in both the closings of the doors of the Temple of Janus and the establishment of peace, and these co-existing achievements are bound closer together by the structure of the *Res Gestae* and the stylistic similarities between the two sites.

Furthermore, as Augustus notes in the *Res Gestae*, the *Ara Pacis* was positioned within the Campus Martius, and its specific location here is viewed as significant for two reasons. First, it was built exactly one mile from the *pomerium* of the city, the boundary where a magistrate's power shifted from *imperium militare* to that of *imperium domi*.[42] This evocative and symbolic placement has been interpreted in two ways. Traditionally, the location was seen as marking Augustus' arrival into power, the deposition of the magistrate's warlike signs and powers, and the assumption of the peaceful *imperium domi*.[43] More recently, however, Rehak has argued that the location of the altar marks a shift in *imperium* for everyone else but, crucially, *not* for Augustus.[44] He notes that, in 30BC, the Senate decreed that the then-Octavian had tribunician power for life, and that this was renewed in 23BC with the addition of proconsular *imperium* 'so he did not have to lay it down upon entering the city'.[45] Thus, in this revised argument, the closeness to the *pomerium* is understood not as a symbol of the transfer to *imperium domi* but, rather, the continuity of Augustus' *imperium militare.*

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[40] On the similarities between the *Ara Pacis* and the Temple of Janus, see Simon (1967), 9; Torelli (1982), 32-3; and Rehak (2006), 99-100.
[41] See Simon (1967), pl.1, no.2; and Torelli (1982), pl.II.6, pl.II.7. Similarly, a coin from the age of Domitian shows the west side of the *Ara Pacis* with the new *Janus quadrifons* of the Forum Transitorium; see Torelli (192), pl. II.8. Interestingly, some coins depicting the *Ara Pacis* also show it with wooden doors, although the construction of these is still disputed.
[42] Livy 3.20.6-7. On the *pomerium* as characterising Rome in reference to a series of bi-polarities, see Laurence (1993), and *id.* (1996), 111-2, who argues that this symbolic limit was used by the Romans to define their relationship to the landscape beyond it boundaries through a series of oppositions (for example, us vs. them, *domi* vs. *militia*, peace vs. warfare, *auspicium* vs. *imperium*).
[43] Torelli (1982): 29-32.
[44] Rehak (2006): 98.
[45] Dio 53.32.5-6.

Second, the altar's position in relation to the *Horologium Augusti,* a giant obelisk that formed a sundial, is widely understood in terms of Augustus' appropriation of time [see Fig. 3.1].[46] Buchner, in particular, proposed that the locations of the *Horologium* and the *Ara Pacis* were specifically chosen due to the astronomical relation between the monuments and their shadows; and he argues that, on September 23rd, (Augustus' birthday and the autumn equinox) the gnomon of the *Horologium* would project its shadow directly towards the interior of the *Ara Pacis*.[47] Thus, the *Horologium-Ara Pacis* complex can be interpreted as a sort of giant 'cosmic clock', built to emphasise the climactic points of the solar year and their intrinsic connection to Augustus's own life.[48]

Such explicit positioning, then, both in the literary account of the *Res Gestae* and the physical layout of the city, suggests that, if ever a monument was intended to demonstrate the implications and significance of Augustus' rule, the *Ara Pacis* was it. The imagery on display on the exterior walls also does little to detract from the apparent 'Augustan-ness' of the altar complex. The upper register of the exterior walls of the *Ara Pacis* is divided between allegoric and pseudo-historical relief panels [see Fig. 3.6].[49] The north and south upper walls depict a sacrificial procession, with the emperor and members of the imperial family on the south side, and officials (such as magistrates, priests, senators) on the north side.[50] The east and west walls, in contrast, consist of four panels, each depicting a more static allegorical or mythological scene:[51] a version of the she-wolf nursing Romulus and Remus; the figure of Roma seated on a pile of armour, flanked by Honos and Virtus; a female figure with two children, who has been variously identified as Pax, Venus, or Tellus; and a male figure performing a sacrifice, traditionally interpreted as Aeneas sacrificing to the Penates, but more recently identified as King Numa.[52] The combination of these figural reliefs is interpreted as a

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[46] Wallace-Hadrill (1987), 224, notes that the *Horologium Augusti* would have been impossible during the Republic – the correlation of solar and civic years was only made possible by Caesar's transformation of the Roman civil year, which was not completely precise until 8BC, when the leap year was added and, incidentally, the year the *Horologium* was put up.

[47] Buchner (1976). Cf. Elsner (1991), 52, who agues that the whole orientation of the precinct was 'dictated' by a complex geometry based on the equinoctial line in the grid of the solarium, which would have cut through the entrances to the *Ara Pacis*' precinct wall and onto the sacrificial altar itself. Although scholarly discussion of this precinct is generally informed by Buchner's original calculations, it should be noted that his theories cannot be concretely proven due to a lack of certifiable evidence; cf. Haselberger (2014).

[48] Rehak (2006): 137.

[49] An excellent resource for highlighting the variety of scholarship on these friezes, their form, identification, and meaning, can be found at http://www.oxfordbibliographies.com/view/document/obo-9780195389661/obo-9780195389661-0096.xml#obo-9780195389661-0096-div1-0003 (last modified September 2015).

[50] On the sacrificial procession in particular, see Elsner (1991).

[51] A good summary of each panel, with appropriate bibliography is Rehak (2006), 108-137.

[52] On the Aeneas vs. Numa debate, see Rehak (2001) and *id.* (2006), esp. 115-120. It is pertinent that King Numa was the original founder of the Temple of Janus – given the stylistic similarities between

clear dynastic statement — the mythical and heroic past (east/west upper panels) is linked to the Augustan present (north/south upper panels), which will continue to be commemorated in the future (the interior altar decoration depicts another sacrificial procession) — and it is unsurprising that scholars have focused their discussions predominantly on these upper figural reliefs.[53]

As previously stated, though, rather than examine these upper register figural relief panels, this chapter will focus almost exclusively on the lower register of the *Ara Pacis'* exterior walls — a huge acanthus frieze that surrounds the entire enclosure [see Fig. 3.7]. Each of the panels follows the same overall general pattern, with individual differences only coming into focus on closer inspection. The generating element of each lower frieze panel is an acanthus plant, with the large leaves at the base acting as a central focal point for the viewer. This acanthus plant transforms into spiralling vines, which shoot off in all directions, before transforming again into a wide variety of tendrils and blossoms, all simultaneously in full bloom.[54] This vibrant display of plant life is also populated with several animals, such as small reptiles (frogs, snakes, lizards), insects (snails, scorpions, crickets, butterflies), and birds (swans, sparrows). Each of the four walls of the frieze is bordered to the sides by further vegetal ornament, and above by a geometric-type design, firmly separating them from the figural reliefs above.

Although this type of acanthus-centred ornament was extremely popular on Augustan buildings in Rome, no other imperial structure carries so much of it:[55] at nearly two metres tall, the lower panels account for more than half of the outside façade (nearly fifty-five square metres of the decoration), with four rectangular panels (east and west walls), two lateral friezes (north and south walls), and the pilasters on the four corners of the enclosure. Furthermore, in its original location in the Campus Martius, the acanthus frieze would be at the eye-level of those approaching the west entry steps, those following the long sides of the enclosure along the ground sloping upward toward the Via Flaminia, or those standing street-side at the east opening, and would therefore have a particularly strong visual impact.[56] The original colourful vibrancy of the frieze, with its deep blue background and bold greens, golds, and reds, is now lost; but it is still an eye-catching sight to behold.[57]

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the Temple and the *Ara Pacis* previously discussed, Rehak's alternative identification of this figure as Numa should not be discounted.

[53] Kellum (1994a): 28.

[54] For a breakdown of all the plant species to be found on the *Ara Pacis*, and their location on the monument, see Caneva (2010), 42-3, Table 1.

[55] Rehak (2006): 104.

[56] Kellum (1994a): 28.

[57] In 2014, in honour of the bicentennial of Augustus' death, a team of researchers displayed an exhibition of the colour reconstruction of the *Ara Pacis* through the use of non-invasive light projection

Figure vs. Ornament

The floral friezes were initially dismissed and believed to have no functional relationship to the rest of the monument. Early examples of scholarship on the lower panels tend to focus on the stylistic origins of the floral ornament rather than any possible significance that it may have within the context of the monument as a whole.[58] Even in the 1970s, Bianchi-Bandinelli still maintained that the interest of the *Ara Pacis* resides chiefly in the decoration of the inside precinct and that the upper outside panels have a 'programmatic conformity which stamps all official art'; and, although he believes the floral friezes are a vivid feature, he argues that this is only from an artistic viewpoint and their functional relationship remains nil.[59] More recently, however, it is now widely accepted that the floral friezes cannot and must not be viewed as purely decorative. Caneva, for example, argues quite rightly that we cannot limit ourselves to viewing nature as simply decorative, for this hides the vision of the ancient man who uses plants as methods of communication by means of images that we have forgotten or made trivial;[60] and, in terms of the *Ara Pacis* specifically, we are not just dealing with a simply decorative message but, rather, an allegorical representation that transmits a symbolic message.[61]

One of the most in-depth examinations of this potential symbolism is Castriota's monograph on *The Ara Pacis Augustae and the Imagery of Abundance in Later Greek and Early Roman Imperial Art*, which deals almost exclusively with the study of the floral ornament on the monument.[62] Throughout this work, Castriota places a strong focus on reconstituting the inherited tradition or 'interpretive strategy' that the wider Augustan audience would have bought to bear in responding to the imagery as a whole. Through long discussions of the divine associations of plants and an examination of the altar's stylistic predecessors, he ultimately argues that the imagery of the floral frieze is a 'harmonious assemblage of visual metonyms' that directs the viewer to their significative function.[63] It is

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directly onto the monument itself. Unfortunately, there was no accompanying exhibition catalogue, but a good summary of the effects can be found in Ergin (2018).

[58] For example, Kraus (1953); and Petersen (1902).

[59] Bianchi-Bandinelli (1970).

[60] See Caneva (2010).

[61] Cf. Vitr. *de Arch* 1.5, which infers that elements of a good monument will never be simply decorative: *Historias autem plures novisse oportet, quod multa ornamenta saepe in operibus architecti designant, de quibus argumentis rationem, cur fecerint, quaerentibus reddere debent*/ The architect must possess a good knowledge of history, which permits him to explain to the eventual interlocutors the symbolic meaning with which he often embellishes buildings.

[62] Castriota's (1995) monograph builds on previous studies by L'Orange (1962), who perceived the floral friezes as a visual embodiment of the Golden Age, based on the imagery of Virgil's fourth *Eclogue*; and Büsing (1977), who examined the relationship between the upper and lower panels in order to highlight how the schematic distribution of the acanthus was carefully coordinated with the figures directly above.

[63] Castriota (1995): 86.

for this reason that he distinguishes between the interior garlands, as general symbols of abundance to all deities, and the abstract and stylised form of the friezes, as specific symbols of an Augustan mythology based on arboreal elements.[64]

The renewed focus on the floral friezes can perhaps be understood as part of a broader revisionist agenda to re-think the categorisation of ancient materials as either simply 'figure' or 'ornament'.[65] Squire, in particular, notes two main problems in previous discussions of the relationship between 'figure' and 'ornament', both of which can be seen in the more traditional discussions of the floral friezes: first, scholars have uncritically imposed post-Enlightenment interpretative frameworks on what constitutes 'figure' and 'ornament' onto ancient materials; and second, scholars have approached 'ornament' as a means of categorising materials, usually studying the decorative 'surrounds' in isolation from the figurative forms they frame.[66] These problems, in turn, led to continued 'anachronistic assumptions about form and value' that create 'hierarchical segregations' between the proper 'content' of the work and the 'superfluous frivolity' of its surrounding adornment.[67] However, over the last twenty-five years, there have been numerous calls to 're-evaluate the semantics of decoration' as part of a 'larger reorientation of aesthetics and art history, a movement from the centre to the margins'; and ornament has emerged as a means of 'deconstructing the ideological frameworks of post-Enlightenment aesthetics.[68]

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[64] Castriota (1995): 28. The distinction is not quite as clear-cut as Castriota suggests, since the garlands are not devoid of an Augustan reading themselves. The number of garlands, twelve, could be viewed as alluding to the passage of the twelve *saecula*, which would mark the conclusion of the Great year and usher in a new Golden Age, the *aurea aetas* (the Augustan age) – see, e.g. Holliday (1990), 545. Similarly, Simon (1967), 13-14, argues that the garlands are constructed in a way that is uniquely Augustan. It does seem fair to say, though, that the sacrificial context of the interior garlands does denote a slightly different emphasis compared to the outside friezes (cf. n. 4, 5, 6, above).

[65] See, for examples, the articles in Dietrich and Squire's (2018) edited volume. An interesting anomaly to this trend, and specifically in relation to the *Ara Pacis*, is Elsner's (1995b) response to Castriota. Here, he argues that Castriota places *too much* emphasis on the floral friezes, thus focusing on 'what has always been seen as marginal' but with 'all the detail which would normally be accorded not to the margin but to the centre'; and, following this, he concludes that the floral friezes should continue to be viewed as an ornamental background (albeit one full of symbolism) to the main imperial, mythic, and sacrificial themes of its 'prime' images. This critique of Castriota's position on the importance of the supposedly marginal surely goes against his own arguments elsewhere (1995a) that Roman art should be understood as having multivalent viewer interpretations; and, later (2017), his rejection of the Kantian formulation of the *ergon/parergon* relationship.

[66] Squire (2018): 21.

[67] Squire (2018): 2, 19. The debt here is to the Kantian notion of aesthetics, as expressed in his *Critique of Judgement* (*Kritik der Urtheilskraft*), first published in 1790 and revised in 1793 and 1799. Most notably, in the latter two editions, he argues that ornaments (*Zieraten*) are said to be subservient, 'parergonal' adjuncts to the central artistic *ergon*. For an introduction to the role of Kantian aesthetics in the interpretation of ancient materials, see Platt and Squire (2017), 39, n.71; and Squire (2018), 17-20.

[68] Squire (2018): 16-17. This shift is, of course, informed by Derrida (1987), esp. 15-147, where he dismantles the Kantian framework by refusing any straightforward detachment of *ergon* from *parergon*. Platt and Squire (2017), 47-59, provide an overview of recent scholarship on Derrida, particularly in relation to ancient materials; cf. Squire (2018), 16, n.36, for further bibliography.

It is in this context, then, that I too will examine the *Ara Pacis'* floral friezes, focusing on how a revised understanding of this so-called 'ornament' and the movement of the traditionally 'marginal' to the 'central' both contribute to and open up new avenues of interpretation. Furthermore, my examination will also offer a revision of the other previously mentioned scholarly framework for interpreting the monument – Zanker's *Power of Images*. As we can see from the overview of approaches, even when scholars interpret the floral friezes as more than 'ornament' or 'decoration', they are still hindered in many ways by Zanker's narrative, still tempted to analyse the friezes, along with all of Augustan imagery, through a self-contained system of programmatic 'communication';[69] and there continues to be a sustained focus on the need to 'decode' a single prefabricated message.[70]

This is particularly frustrating because, in more general terms, scholars are increasingly recognising the need to question Zanker's totalising view of Augustan imagery and embrace the potential for polysemy and ambivalence within the visual 'message'.[71] To borrow Elsner's words, 'no society has ever been so efficiently dictatorial that the image propagated by the government of itself was at once the only image held of the government by every citizen', and so, to follow Zanker's interpretation, would be to 'deprive art of any subversive or conflictive viewings in a way that is culturally and sociologically too simplistic'.[72] Indeed, one could argue that Augustus' paradoxical position as *primus inter pares* required a system of 'communication' that embraced ambivalence.[73]

This is not about denying the existence of an Augustan 'message', but, instead, refining it by recognising its exploitation of 'more subtle modes of visual ambivalence' and the resultant potential for more divergent viewer and scholarly responses;[74] or, to put it another way, the message itself is not ambiguous, but that very same message is also built on a series of premises where straightforward dichotomies just do not apply. In response to this

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[69] Squire (2013a): 245.
[70] Squire (2013a), 270, notes that the vast majority of scholars on Augustan image-making still proceed from the 'tacit assumption of communicated propaganda'; and, although Zanker remains the most explicit proponent of an 'internalised' visual culture, most subsequent scholarship has concurred with the overall assumption of a fixed message.
[71] The classic response remains Wallace-Hadrill (1989); cf. Galinsky (1996), 370-5, who argues for the 'allowance of contradictions during the Augustan Age'. The essays in Hardie's (2009) edited volume also engage with this debate across a range of media and perspectives.
[72] Elsner (1991): 51; cf. Elsner (1995a) on the importance of the viewer and the multiplicity of viewer interpretations. It is in this context that Squire (2013a) considers the Prima Porta Augustus, a statue that 'epitomizes our collective ideas about both Augustus and the principate' (243) – here, Squire argues that the statue embodies a sophisticated and self-referential politics of visual ambiguity.
[73] Squire (2013a): 270; cf. Platt (2009), 74, who notes that 'when traditional mechanisms of power had literally been supplanted, it is not surprising to find that conventional representational categories were being radically rethought'. Galinsky (2007) also argues that the paradoxes of 'continuity and change' or 'tradition and innovation' are perspectives that apply to just about all manifestations of Roman religion.
[74] Squire (2013a): 271-2.

more revisionist approach, then, my analysis in this chapter similarly seeks to demonstrate how the 'power' of the floral friezes lay in the gesture not of excising ambiguity but, rather, embracing ambivalence and harnessing it to a new political discourse.[75] More specifically, I will argue that the friezes are an especially useful example for demonstrating these issues because of their inherent connection to garden space, which, in turn, lends itself naturally to a discussion on paradox and ambiguity.

Furthermore, it has long been recognised that the floral friezes showcase a particularly 'Augustan' garden-inspired theme, enhanced and informed by its compositional similarities to Livia's famous painted Garden Room at Prima Porta. Both compositions, through careful referencing to Augustus' botanic mythology, demonstrate the potential of plants and trees as evocative visual stimuli. I will argue, though, that it is possible to push this connection to garden space further if we view the floral friezes as part of carefully constructed spatial relationships (most notably, in dialogue with the new sacral-idyllic landscape of Augustan Rome), rather than just static artistic friezes, outside of time and space. My discussion will therefore move beyond the purely visual by not only considering the lower friezes as a contained part of the sculptural programme, but also as a container for the altar complex itself; and I will argue that the *Ara Pacis* does not just represent a distinct garden artistry, but that, in its position as both container and contained, it also replicates the spatial ambiguities of garden space at large. First, though, I must return to the site of the omen of the *Gallina Alba* and introduce my second case study.

Livia's Garden Room

The Villa of Livia, built in the early days of empire by Augustus for his wife, was located just outside of Rome on a large plateau dominating the Tiber valley.[76] Here, in the underground apartments, at the left of the vestibule, an open archway leads us into a large room (measuring 11.7m by 5.9m) where the walls are completely covered in one continuous painting of a garden scene.[77] This is the famous Garden Room at Prima Porta [see Fig. 3.8].[78]

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[75] Following Squire (2013a), 245, and his approach to the Prima Porta Augustus.
[76] For archaeological reports on the villa site, see Calci and Messineo (1984); Messineo (1992); *id.* (2001); and Zarmakoupi (2008). On the gardens of the Villa of Livia, see Klynne and Liljenstolpe (1996); *ead.* (1997-8); *ead.* (2000); and Klynne (2005). Cf. n.19, above.
[77] The single open archway measures 2.12m high and 1.43m wide. On the basis of Sulze (1932), pl.39, there appears to be no evidence of the presence of *cardines* (turning posts), nor do the jambs appear to have been cut for doors. It has, therefore, always been assumed that the archway was designed as open.
[78] The basic monograph for the garden room is still Gabriel (1955), which can be supplemented by Kellum (1994b); Kuttner (1999); Spencer (2010), 155-61; and Jones (2016), 55-75. Reeder (2001) has attempted, at some point unsuccessfully, an integration of the architecture and iconography across the

Starting from the foreground and working out, the painting features a low wickerwork fence, beyond which is a clipped grass *ambulatio* featuring a selection of individually laid out small plantings. The wicker fence features three gates, one on each of the shorter walls, and one on the longer wall opposite the entrance archway. The grass *ambulatio* is again bordered on the far side by another wall, this one of stone, which has six recessed niches, each containing a tree (four spruces, one oak, and one pine) [see Figs. 3.9 – 3.15].[79] Beyond the stone parapet is a dense thicket of closely packed plantings of many varieties. Our eyes are immediately drawn to the variety and density of this garden scene – tall trees interspersed with low shrubs, flowers of every colour, bountiful fruits, the delightful *ambulatio*, and also birds perching and flying all through the vibrant shrubbery. The whole scene is topped by an expanse of blue sky; and a narrow band runs all around the top edge (the remains of an elaborate stuccoed vault), variously identified as either thatching or, more commonly, the rocky edge of a grotto or cave.[80]

It must be pointed out that it was not unusual to find depictions of garden prospects during this period;[81] and it is important to note the garden room's physical and visual effects within the context of wall-painting more generally, and not just in relation to any 'Augustan' programme.[82] Since around 80BC, so-called 'Second-Style' landscapes had become a key feature of interior decoration, with Romans covering the walls of their houses with 'most pleasing landscapes, representing villas, porticoes, ornamental gardening, woods, groves, hills, fishponds, canals, rivers, sea-shores, and anything else one could desire'.[83] This style

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entire villa site; and argues, in particular, for the influence of the omen and the subsequent laurel grove over the villa's design.

[79] For the purpose of identification moving forward, the effect of these niches is to divide the paintings into six 'panels', each with a tree at its centre. On the classification of the panels, I follow Gabriel (1955). These panels are shown in Figs. 3.9, 3.10, 3.11, 3.12, 3.13, 3.14, and 3.15.

[80] Gabriel (1955), 7-8, argued that the painted fringe was a sort of thatch. However, the ceiling is more commonly thought to suggest a grotto or cave – see, for example, Ling (1991), 150; Reeder (2001), 35-44; Spencer (2010), 160. Kuttner (1999), 27, in particular, argues that the Garden Room would have been finished in the same way as a real grotto, such as the inner cavern at Sperlonga; and that the lost stuccoed vault significantly misleads our sense of the balance of 'naturalness' with artificiality.

[81] On the dating of the villa, see n.19, above.

[82] For the position of Livia's Garden Room specifically in relation to the tradition of garden paintings, see Kuttner (1999), 12-23; and Ling (1991), 29, 143.

[83] From Plin. *Nat.* 35.116: *eaque sunt scripta antiquis litteris Latinis; non fraudando et Studio divi Augusti aetate, qui primus instituit amoenissimam parietum picturam, villas et porticus ac topiaria opera, lucos, nemora, colles, piscinas, euripos, amnes, litora, qualia quis optaret, varias ibi obambulantium species aut navigantium terraque villas adeuntium asellis aut vehiculis, iam piscantes, aucupantes aut venantes aut etiam vindemiantes.*
The division of Roman wall painting into four distinct and chronologically ordered styles comes from the work of Mau (1882). This system charts chronological developments from the second century BC to late first century AD, and relied heavily on Vitruvius' comments (*de Arch* 7.5) on the development of painting styles (on Vitruvius, see e.g. Elsner (1995a), 323, n.40; and Platt (2009), 51-7). Useful summaries of Mau's approach and the four 'styles' can be found in Bergmann (2001); Tybout (2002); Stewart (2004), 74-92; Strocka (2007); and Lorenz (2015). Scholarly reception of Mau's system is mixed, particularly because his system of linear progression fails to take into account the co-existence

can be generally characterised by the creation of three-dimensional spaces from a two-dimensional plane, resulting in the sensation of being drawn out into a landscape framed by architectural devices. The aim of these elaborate architectural frames depicted *on* the wall seems to 'lend the impression that the wall itself dissolves, allowing audiences isolated glimpses onto a world outside'.[84]

Early examples of garden prospects within this style initially appear to depict the garden elements as little more than a 'monochrome green fuzz': they are 'occasionally specific' about the leafage, but generally only sketch the plants' botanical qualities, with 'individuated branch patterns and brushy green strokes or masses for foliage'.[85] A radical change, however, occurred in the 30s and 20s BC, when painters developed their style to include clearer, specific representations of individual plants all distinctly shaped and coloured, with the aim of realistic portrayals of individual species.[86] The 'Auditorium of Maecenas' is a good example of this shift in representational content and pictorial means [see Fig. 3.18].[87] This sunken pavilion features seventeen quadrangular recessed niches across three walls, each decorated with garden and landscape scenes, and therefore creating a *trompe l'oeil* window effect.[88] In each niche we can see a wall of densely packed shrubbery behind a lattice fence featuring its own niche filled with a stone fountain [see Fig. 3.19] – a composition that undoubtedly reminds us of some of the key compositional elements within Livia's Garden Room.

In the context of this development of form and style, then, the garden prospect of Livia's Garden Room, with its realistic depiction of various botanical elements, is not unique. However, what *is* unique and most striking about this particular garden room is the way in

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of different styles at a specific date; whereas evidence from Pompeii and the Bay of Naples clearly demonstrates multiple styles in singular residences at the time of the Vesuvian eruption in AD79 (as noted by Elsner (1995a), 63). On the need to question the conventional chronological ordering, see especially Bergmann (1994); Leach (2004); and Lorenz (2008), 4-13; cf. Clarke (1991), 31, who notes that 'the use of Mau's system has become over refined'.

[84] Platt and Squire (2017): 23.

[85] Kuttner (1999): 22-23. Kuttner also views the unspecific nature of the plants' location in these scenes in strong contrast to the second-style specificity about hard architecture's tectonic structures, materials, and spatial configurations.

[86] On the development from the 'monochrome green fuzz' to plant specificity within Second-Style garden prospects, see Kuttner (1999). Cf. Carroll (2015), who categorizes three types of garden and landscape painting: 1) gardens as large-scale murals; 2) the portrayal of architectural settings with enclosed gardens; and 3) sacro-idyllic landscapes. Of these three groups, 1 and 2 are seen as straddling Mau's Second and Third-Styles, with 3 belonging to the Third and Fourth. The most recent overview of garden paintings is Bergmann (2018).

[87] Kuttner (1999): 24-6. On the Auditorium of Maecenas, see de Vos (1983), 231-47; Haüber (1990); and Wyler (2013).

[88] The paintings date to the first century AD, during a second phase of décor; see Wyler (2013), 546.

which it carries the accepted illusionistic prospect of the Second Style to its very limits.[89] For, rather than being presented with a landscape vista as seen through colonnades, this garden room features no visible architectural supports at all.[90] Instead, we are faced with a garden prospect that runs unbroken around the whole room – there are no columns or pillars, and the walls have all but disappeared – and so, rather than looking out at the garden, it seems that the viewer is now firmly placed *within* it. The only architectural elements to be found are the low wickerwork fence and stone parapet, both of which run around the room horizontally [see Fig. 3.20].[91]

In many ways, then, the garden room fits awkwardly into the Second-Style classification, since it lacks 'the customary wall divisions in this traditional so-called "architectural" style'.[92] It can, however, also be read in the context of another painting style – the sacral-idyllic landscape, a popular decorative choice from the time of the Late Republic onwards.[93] According to Silberberg-Peirce, such Third-Style landscapes have four basic components: 1) architecture; 2) sacred implements or sculpture; 3) figures; and 4) the handling of landscape nature.[94] In a departure from the Second-Style, these paintings are often characterised by their inclusion of 'shadowy figures of farmers, shepherds, goatherds wayfarers, and a variety of rustics' who represent 'morality, courage, and religiosity'.[95] Some of the best-known examples of this style can be found in the Villa of Agrippa Postumus at Boscotrecase.[96] On the north wall of the 'Red Room' [see Fig. 3.21], for example, we find a classic configuration of the components of this style. The painting depicts a statue of a goddess situated on a rocky island dominated by a large tree. In the background of the composition, we see a grove surrounding two temples, and the foreground is populated by

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[89] Jones (2016), 59, notes that 'to the extent that [the room] is indeed unique, it is so by way of extending features we see elsewhere in Roman art'.
[90] Cf. Simon (1967), 11, on the lack of architectural supports on the *Ara Pacis*: 'architectonic elements are reduced to a minimum…any illusion they could support the structure is thus shattered'.
[91] In response to the lack of columns within the composition, Jones (2016), 69-71, suggests that there may have been actual columns (perhaps wooden) in the room that acted as 'illusionary support' for the ceiling above. This is a provocative suggestion, based on essentially no archaeological evidence, and it appears to be driven by the author's disbelief in an unsupported roof as an 'adventurous essay in fabulous architecture'. In the rest of his discussion, Jones clearly demonstrates that the Romans delighted in playing with boundaries, and yet does not appear willing to extend this notion of play to a full-scale immersion experiment that removes all vertical support.
[92] Reeder (2001): 83.
[93] Evidence indicates that the earliest examples of this style date from c.40BC. They feature in the *atrium* of the Villa of the Mysteries at Pompeii; and the upper wall of the *cubiculum diurnum* and the rear wall of he *cubiculum* at Boscoreale. For analysis of sacral-idyllic landscapes, see e.g. Silberberg (1980); Silberberg-Peirce (1981); Leach (1974); *ead.* (1984); Giesecke (2007), 120-2; and Bergmann (1992).
[94] Silberberg-Peirce (1981): 242.
[95] Giesecke (2001): 21-2. On religion and rusticity in the Roman world, see North (1995).
[96] Ling (1991), 55, calls them 'the finest achievements of the early Third Style. On the paintings in the villa, see von Blackenhagen and Alexander (1962).

figures – two female worshippers and a child crossing a bridge onto an island, and a goatherd lounging by one of the monuments.

Although Livia's room does not include such religious monuments or rustic figures, it is perhaps the 'essence' of these sacral-idyllic landscapes that has drawn parallels with the garden scene.[97] As we shall see, the garden room is imbued with a divine aura through its representation of Augustus' arboreal mythology; and such a paradisiacal display reminds us of the idealistic sacral-idyllic form, itself an example of human acts and gestures of piety towards the *numen* of nature.[98] The painting, as an idealized garden fiction with links to divine authority but with some of the ordering principles of the architectural style, can thus be interpreted as the point where traditional Second-Style framing meets the mythical and religious aura of the sacral-idyllic landscape.

Garden Imagery as Augustan 'Propaganda'

The mythical or sacred connotations of the room are further enhanced by the inclusion of specific plant types within the artistic display. In the first instance, and taking into account the location of the garden room as part of the villa site of the *Gallina Alba* omen, it is unsurprising that laurel features prominently throughout the composition. In fact, the laurel is shown in all its forms around the room – low shrubs, domestic, and wild – and, thus, extends the link between Augustus and the sacred laurel grove at the villa to the garden room itself. Like Kellum, I do not wish to imply that the garden room is an attempt to recreate the laurel grove of the Caesars in artistic form; but the 'magical affinity' between Augustus and the laurel, so tied to this estate, certainly provides us with a pretext through which we should view the painting.[99] Indeed, there are many 'Augustan' plants featured in the composition, all of which contribute to and reflect the more general botanic mythology promoted by the new emperor.

[97] Gabriel (1955), 12-6, does hint at the painting's interpretation as a sacral-idyllic landscape, but does not develop this argument beyond a list of gods to whom the plantings on display were sacred. Reeder (2001) is perhaps the lengthiest formation of this argument.
[98] Bergmann (1992): 28. Cf. Hunt (2016), 270, who argues that sacral-idyllic paintings offer a valuable insight into the 'power to shape Roman thinking about the intersection of trees and the world of the divine', demonstrating 'theological thinking about trees' rather than actual 'religious practice'.
[99] Kellum (1994b), 222, suggests a 'mutually informing relationship' between the iconography and symbolism of the garden room, the actual laurel grove, and the statue of Augustus from the same Prima Porta site.

The oak, for example, holds a prominent position as a recessed tree in panel II [see Fig. 3.16] and, when viewed in combination with the laurel, we are reminded of the central role of these two trees on the day Octavian was given the name Augustus:[100]

> *For the right to place the laurel trees in front of the royal residence and to hang the crown of oak above them was voted to him to symbolize that he was always victor over his enemies and saviour of his citizens.*

The laurel, as we know, had a strong religious significance to the Romans as a symbol of Apollo, and it was inherently linked to the Julio-Claudian line due to their use of the plant from their own grove to make triumphal crowns. The oak featured in this story, a traditional symbol of Jupiter, was similarly used in a symbolic crown, since a crown of oak (the *corona civica*) was traditionally awarded to a person who had saved a fellow citizen.[101] Thus, the combination of these two trees as part of Augustus' naming day advertised to the Romans 'in one leafy display' that he was 'both a hero of the Republic and the sacrosanct person of the populace';[102] and so the inclusion of these botanical species as part of the Garden Room could be interpreted as referencing this same message. In fact, every conceivable material from which a triumphal crown can be made is represented in the room – not just oak or laurel, but also ivy (depicted as part of the ambulatory), myrtle (in the dense thicket), and pine (in the recess of panel V [see Fig. 3.14]).[103]

Palms also feature at least four times within the composition, mostly as part of the dense thicket in the background, but also on panel III [see Figs. 3.13 and 3.17], where it sits behind the stone wall, seemingly flanking the central recess on both sides. In a similar fashion to the combination of laurel and oak, the pairing of palms and oaks within the painting is most likely an allusion to another anecdote involving Augustus and trees that, in itself, was regarded as a symbol of the rebirth of the state:[104]

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[100] Dio 53.16.4, trans. Cary (1917): καὶ γὰρ τό τε τὰς δάφνας πρὸ τῶν βασιλείων αὐτοῦ προτίθεσθαι, καὶ τὸ τὸν στέφανον τὸν δρύινον ὑπὲρ αὐτῶν ἀρτᾶσθαι, τότε οἱ ὡς καὶ ἀεὶ τούς τε πολεμίους νικῶντι καὶ τοὺς πολίτας σώζοντι ἐψηφίσθη; cf. *RG* 34. The laurel trees mentioned in this story are the same laurel trees depicted on coins of Augustus – see n.25, above.

[101] In Virgil's *Georgics* (2.15-16), the oak is 'especially luxuriant in foliage for Jupiter' (*Iovi…maxima frondret aesculus*). On Augustus' *corona civica*, see *Monumentum Ancyranum* 34.2. Plin. *Nat.* 16.11 notes that oak could also be used as part of a triumphal crown.

[102] Von Stackelberg (2009): 90.

[103] On the use of myrtle in a triumphal crown, see Plin. *Nat.* 15.126-7; on the ivy, *id.* 16.9; and, on the pine, Plut. *Quaest. Conv.* 5.3.676.

[104] Suet. *Aug.* 92.1-2, trans. Rolfe (1913): *Enatam inter iuncturas lapidum ante domum suam palmam in conpluvium deorum Penatium transtulit, utque coalesceret magno opere curavit. Apud insulam Capreas veterrimae ilicis demissos iam ad terram languentisque ramos convaluisse adventu suo, adeo laetatus est, ut eas cum re p. Neapolitanorum permutaverit Aenaria data.* For a history of the palm tree, see Plin. *Nat.* 13.6-9.

> *When a palm tree sprang up between the crevices of the pavement before his house, he transplanted it to the inner courtyard beside his household gods and took great pains to make it grow. He was so pleased that the branches of the old oak, which had already dropped to the ground and were withering, became vigorous again on his arrival in the island of Capri, that he arranged with the city of Naples to give him the island in exchange for Aenaria.*

More generally, the palm also took its name from a symbol of rebirth — the Greek word for palm, φοῖνιξ, denoted the mythical Phoenix who was fabled to have built its nest atop the tree.[105]

The all-surrounding, botanically diverse prospect of Livia's Garden Room, with its inclusion of 'Augustan' elements, finds a parallel in the floral friezes of the *Ara Pacis*. Here, the use of the acanthus plant as the central 'generating' element of the lower register is particularly important in establishing a specifically Augustan feel to the whole composition [see Fig. 3.22]. This plant is characterised by a loss of leaves and apparent death in the summer, followed by resurgence once the summer drought is over; thus it is a perfect choice for characterising the supposed rebirth of Rome that played such a large role in establishing the Augustan regime.[106] Augustus may have claimed to be simply restoring the Republic, but we know now that the political institutions of Rome underwent radical changes throughout his Principate. The transformative effect of this regime change is reflected in the way the acanthus transforms into vines, which then shoot out in all directions, before transforming again into a wide variety of tendrils and blossoms at their end points [see Fig. 3.23].[107] Interestingly, a large proportion of these end shoots are identified as bulbous plants (characterized by full blooms and often short or absent stems) which, taken together, allude to a general 'reflowering' of the earth. These bulbous plants reinforce the message of rebirth started at the beginning of the tendril with the acanthus base. Thus the positioning of symbols of rebirth at the beginning and end points of the floral spirals reminds us that the political transformation at hand during the Augustan regime was achieved under the pretext of a restoration.

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[105] See Pollini (1993), 197-9. Kellum (1994a), 218, notes an interesting tie between the symbolism of the Augustan palm tree on the Palatine and the cinnamon root which Livia dedicated as memorial to her deceased husband at his temple on the Palatine, since cinnamon was said to have come from the nest of the immortal Phoenix (Plin. *Nat.* 12.85-94; 10.2-5).

[106] Caneva (2010): 108. On the acanthus as part of the *Ara Pacis*, see esp. Pollini (1993). For a discussion of acanthus imagery in antiquity, see Rykwert (1982).

[107] On the 'vines of paradise', see Zanker (1988), 179-83. Caneva (2011), 42-3, table 1, identifies ninety different plant species across the frieze.

Furthermore, the end shoots of the acanthus tendrils do not just emit a random collection of blooming flowers designed to express a generic feeling of reborn prosperity. Instead, they emit a collection of very distinct and distinguishable botanical species, which, once again, would be especially pertinent to a keen-eyed contemporary viewer as symbols of Augustus' appropriation of botanical features into his own mythology. For example, just as we saw in Livia's Garden Room, the laurel, the oak, and the palm all feature.[108] Although laurel is not as prominent on the floral frieze as one might expect considering the importance of the Augustus-Apollo connection it represents, its presence on the lower register is 'underscored by the laurel that is worn [as crowns] and carried in the figured friezes above' [see Fig. 3.24].[109] Apolline messaging may be read, however, in the presence of acanthus – the acanthus scroll motif made its earliest appearance in Augustan Rome as part of a tripod on the doorframe of the Temple of Apollo on the Palatine in 28BC.[110]

Alongside these typically Augustan plants, the floral friezes also present us with a number of symbols –most notably, six large grapevines and at least ten recognizable sprigs of ivy – more typically associated with Dionysus, and, therefore, not so obviously associated with the emperor. Augustus did not actively align himself with Dionysus as he did with Apollo;[111] and, indeed, Dionysus was often regarded as a symbol of one of Augustus' earliest rivals, Marc Antony. Why, then, include such features as part of a composition if the artist was trying to portray an Augustan message?[112] Sticking to an Augustus/Apollo vs. Antony/Dionysus reading of the frieze, scholars have tended to see the inclusion of these Dionysian symbols as an examination of the relationship between Augustus and his former enemies, and also the establishment of divine support for Augustus' regime. By subverting former negative associations within a whole composition of Augustan abundance, the 'power' of Dionysus is viewed as ultimately subverted under the new regime: Sauron, for example, sees in the contrast of Apolline-laurel and Dionysian-ivy a direct allusion to the struggle between Augustus and Antony;[113] Caneva, meanwhile, notes that the swans of Apollo [see Fig. 3.25] 'overlook' the Dionysian elements through their apical position, and that this could

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[108] Laurel (*laurus nobilis*) features on the north panel and, potentially, on the south; whilst, oak leaves (*quercus cerris/quercus ilex*) and palm leaves (*phoenix dactylifera*) can be found on all sides of the frieze. See Caneva (2010), 42-3, Table 1.
[109] Kellum (1994a): 32. The only sprig of laurel preserved in the acanthus frieze is to the right on the north frieze.
[110] Kellum (1994a): 33; cf. Carettoni (1966-7).
[111] Grapevines feature on all sides of the frieze; and ivy (*hedera helix*) can be found on the north and south walls. See Caneva (2010), 42-3, Table 1.
[112] Galinsky (2007), 76, notes that the schema of Apollo vs. Dionysus, first proposed by Nietzsche in the late nineteenth century and supported by Zanker (1988), is just another dichotomy that 'simply does not comfortably work in an Augustan context'. Cf. Wyler (2013), on the Augustan trend towards Dionysus; Scapini (2015), who argues for the vitality of Dionysism during the Augustan Age.
[113] Sauron (1982).

refer to the projection of Augustan values over the whole regime;[114] and Castriota argues for a post-Actian reconciliation of Apollo and Dionysus as a *numen mixtum* in Augustan iconography.

Kellum, however, points to a different reading of both the grapevine and the ivy.[115] The grapevine, for example, may have reminded viewers of the *Porticus Liviae*, where a miraculous giant grapevine growing only from a single stem provided shade for the whole structure and produced twelve amphorae of new wine every year.[116] For Kellum, this grapevine 'must have visually connected all four sides' of the Porticus 'while functioning as a living symbol of the unity and fruitful concord of the state and all its citizens'; and thus, like much of the messaging on the floral friezes, the presence of the grapevine could be interpreted as yet another reminder of the rebirth of Rome under Augustus. Similarly, the ivy could be viewed as a further celebration of Augustan Rome, despite its Dionysian connotations – Dionysus, in the form of Liber Pater, was not only celebrated as a god of wine, fertility, and abundance in Augustan poetry, but he was also compared to Augustus.[117]

It certainly seems, then, that the *Ara Pacis* features a very specific array of plants and vegetation, all of which can, in some way, allude to Augustus' appropriation of natural features. It is no coincidence that Zanker used the floral friezes as another potent example of the political and totalitarian approach that he saw in Augustan art. Of course, taking all of the individual components of the frieze and constructing a singular coherent message has led to differences in interpretation, particularly in the exact emphasis of the combined symbolic elements; but there is a broad acceptance that the friezes are images of a specifically Augustan abundance, with direct allusion to the gods and goddesses which were said to be linked to the emperor and the returning Golden Age, therefore emphasising a new botanical aspect to Augustus' own imperial mythology. It is for this reason that the floral friezes have so often been read in conjunction with the imagery of Livia's Garden Room. Like the *Ara Pacis*, the garden room and its various painted plantings do not appear to be mere decoration or 'ornament' but, rather, a visual counterpart to the botanical mythology of the new emperor. In both instances, there appears to be an underlying ideological structure, a shared sense of 'garden artistry', and contemporary viewers of either example would surely be hard pressed not to see the significance of the Augustan message within either composition.

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[114] Caneva (2010): 206.
[115] Kellum (1994a): 29-30.
[116] Plin. *Nat.* 14.11.
[117] Hor. *Ep.* 2.1.5-6; Serv. in Virg. *Aen.* 3.93; in Virg. *G.* 1.5; in Virg. *Ecl.* 5.66; Plut. *De Is. et Os.* 35; *De E apud Delphos* 9.

Does the connection between these two artistic displays, though, merely stop at the inclusion of specific and symbolic plant types? Or can we also find similarities in the way each composition is actually constructed? With these questions in mind, I now move to a comparison of the compositional characteristics of the two case studies; and this, in turn, will introduce some of the ways in which ambiguity and paradoxes may potentially deconstruct or, at the very least, reframe our initial Augustan reading.

Shared characteristics: hyperfertile abundance and contained profusion

Perhaps the most obvious characteristic of both compositions is how every vegetal and floral element is presented to us in full bloom, all simultaneously, regardless of the real-time life cycle of each individual plant. Although the design strives towards 'naturalism', both compositions involve an impossible synchronicity of nature that pushes them into a world of fantasy.[118] Each individual element may look realistic, but this does is not result in a depiction of reality: we see plants that flower in the spring (periwinkles, laurel, iris, roses, poppies, and daisies), alongside the oleanders of July, the chrysanthemums of September, and the pomegranates of autumn.

Just as in Virgil's *Eclogues*, all of nature is represented at once in perfect harmony:[119]

> *Huc ades, o formose puer: tibi lilia plenis*
> *ecce ferunt Nymphae calathis; tibi candida Nais,*
> *pallentis violas et summa papavera carpens,*
> *narcissum et florem iungit bene olentis anethi;*
> *tum, casia atque aliis intexens suavibus herbis,*
> *mollia luteola pingit vaccinia caltha.*
> *ipse ego cana legam tenera lanugine mala*
> *castaneasque nuces, mea quas Amaryllis amabat;*
> *addam cerea pruna (honos erit huic quoque pomo);*
> *et vos, o lauri, carpam et te, proxima myrte,*

[118] Cf. Elsner (1995a), 51-62, on Vitruvian 'realism' in Book 7 of *de Architectura*. Although Vitruvius' prescription *quod est seu potest esse* ('whats exists or can exist') seems to point to a modern materialist conception of reality, it also includes myth; and so, what he is really asking for is for subjects to be depicted in a 'realist' manner that allows them to appear as if they *could* exist in the real three-dimensional world. In the same way, our compositions may depict individual plant forms in a realistic way, but it is the combined impossible synchronicity of each of these individual plants that pushes the overall displays into the realms of 'fantasy', or, as Platt (2009) would term it, 'the marvellous'. The bibliography on this Vitruvian book is vast, but see, for example Ehrhardt (1991); Sauron (1990); Clarke (1991), 49-53; Yerkes (2000); and Stewart (2004), 80-1.

[119] Virg. *Ecl.* 2.45-55.

sic positae quoniam suavis miscetis odores.

Come here O lovely boy: see the Nymphs bring lilies
in heaped baskets for you: the bright Naiad picks
pale violets and the heads of poppy flowers for you,
blends narcissi with fragrant fennel flowers:
then, mixes them with spurge laurel and more sweet herbs,
embroiders hyacinths with yellow marigolds.
I'll gather quinces, pale with soft down,
and chestnuts, that my Amaryllis loved:
I'll add waxy plums: they too shall be honoured:
and I'll pluck you, O laurels, and you, neighbouring myrtle,
since, placed together, you mingle your sweet perfumes.

Alongside the display of burgeoning fertility within the Garden Room, which is further enhanced by symbols of love and fecundity (such as the quince, poppies, roses, and myrtle), signs of miraculous transformation further populate the compositions.[120] Over one third of the identifiable plants in Livia's Garden Room (many of which are duplicated on the *Ara Pacis*) have stories of transformation attached to them:[121] the laurel, for example, is the metamorphosed form of Daphne, the nymph who was transformed into the tree by her father whilst fleeing Apollo; the pine tree was a transformation of Attis; and the cypress was said to have once been a boy, loved by Apollo.[122] In Livia's Garden Room, it perhaps takes a more discerning eye to recognise this transformative tone, as it requires knowledge of the individual plant types. On the *Ara Pacis*, however, the transformation is obvious, since the generating central acanthus literally transforms before our very eyes into different flora and fauna as its tendrils expand. In this way, the transformative and hyper-fertile abundance on the display in the floral friezes has rightly been described as the 'ultimate metamorphoses of the natural into the marvellous'.[123]

What interests me most about this specific portrayal of nature, though, is how it appears to break down the usual constructs of time. In the previous chapter, I discussed how

[120] On the quince, see Plut. *Mor.* 279f.; on poppies, see Ov. *F.* 1.51-4; and on rose and myrtle, see Paus. 6.24.7.
[121] Tally-Schumacher and Niemeier (2016), 62, fig.2, identifies twenty-four plant types in the Garden Room, nine of which (38%) inspired stories involving transformation. Cf. Kellum (1994a), 221.
[122] On the transformation of the laurel, see Ov. *Met.* 1.548f.; on the pine and cypress, see *ibid.* 10.103f. Other plants involving a metamorphosis include acanthus (Ant. Lib. *Met.* 7); myrtle (Ov. *Met.* 10.476f.); poppy (Serv. in Virg. *Ecl.* 2.47); pomegranate (Apollod. *Bibl.* 1.25); oak (Ov. *Met.* 8.633f.); and the rose (as an agent of transformation – Apul. *Met.* 4.2.8). Kellum (1994b), 34-38, details how the animals on display also feed in to this narrative of transformation.
[123] Platt (2009): 72.

the temporal structures at play in Virgil's gardening *excursus* had a profound effect not just on how we viewed the garden as a space, but also how we viewed its relationship to the rest of agricultural space; and here it seems that, once again, understanding how time 'works' is crucial to our understanding of another manifestation of garden space. What sort of conception of time, then, are we dealing with on the *Ara Pacis* and in Livia's Garden Room? It is not enough to say that time is simply suspended here, because what we see in our two compositions are arboreal displays that actually transgress the usual laws of nature.[124] If this were meant to be a 'snapshot' of time, then the plants would all be following their usual life cycle and would not be miraculously in full bloom together; and so the compositions are, in effect, actually 'outside' of time.

The notion of a magical synchronicity of nature and its apparent location 'outside' of time poses a particular challenge to our understanding of the *Ara Pacis* because, from other perspectives, clear temporal structures appear to play an important role in defining the sacrificial space. As previously discussed, the altar's position in relation to the *Horologium Augusti* is widely understood in terms of Augustus' appropriation of time.[125] The altar was also built to commemorate specific Augustan victories in Spain and Gaul in 13BC, and both the foundation of the monument and its final dedication were annually re-commemorated through the ritual of sacrifice.[126] However, despite the monument's ties to specific temporal events, Ovid's description of the annual sacrifice on January 30th hints at some of the ways in which the 'message' of the altar complex undermines its own initially clear temporal framework:[127]

> *tura, sacerdotes, pacalibus addite flammis,*
> *albaque perfusa victima fronte cadat,*
> *utque domus, quae praestat eam, cum pace perennet*
> *ad pia propensos vota rogate deos.*
>
> Add incense, priests, to the flames that burn on the altar of Peace,
> let a white victim fall after the sprinkling of its brow;
> and ask of the gods, who favour pious prayers,
> that the House (of Augustus) that brings peace may last forever.

[124] Cf. Evans (2008), 23, on landscapes of hyperfertility allowing nature to transgress its own laws.
[125] Cf. n.46, 47, 48, above.
[126] Cf. n.27, above. On the ritual calendar as a means of delineating and defining power by evoking events from different chronological periods of the Roman past and arranging them into a meaningful sequence, see Beard (1987). Laurence (1993), meanwhile, argues that, although meaning was enshrined in the city of Rome through symbols and monuments, it was only through ritual that this meaning would have been made explicit; cf. Laurence and Smith (1995-6), and Newlands (1995), 22-4.
[127] Ov. *F.* 1.719-722.

Here, then, although the monument's annual re-commemoration is based on a specific event in time, the peace resulting from these victories is clearly defined by Ovid as eternal – the ritual itself is at a specific moment in time, in honour of another specific moment, but the significance of that ritual attempts to transcend all of time.[128]

The mix of references to calendric events and eternity, as expressed by Ovid, is an issue that had been explored at some length by Holliday, whose article seeks to analyse the *Ara Pacis* as an 'intricate metaphor for the nature of the transitory moment in relation to larger cycles of time'.[129] Here, the author discusses how the contrast between the upper processional reliefs (representative of an exact moment in history, the founding of the altar) and the upper allegorical panel (representative of mythical and eternal characters) creates an intersection between two co-existent types of time, centred on the form of religious ritual. The ritual act of Augustus, as depicted on the processional reliefs, is seen as reproducing the primordial act of Aeneas' ritual, as depicted on the west wall; and thus, though ritual, 'profane sacred time and space are transcended into mythical…time and space, [with] the duration of time temporarily suspended'.[130]

I find it surprising, though, that Holliday only includes a limited discussion of the floral friezes in his article, only briefly noting how the floral ornamentation indicates that Augustus' accomplishments were to be rendered eternal through their association with the sacred precinct. It seems to me, though, that saying the floral friezes represent 'eternity' does not go quite far enough. The alignment of the *Ara Pacis*' floral composition with the hyper-fertile abundance we also see in Livia's Garden Room creates an ambiguous message that cannot simply be described as representing 'eternal abundance', because, as I have argued, the collective significance of the compositions actually shows a complete disregard for the seasonal understanding of time intrinsic to the plants' natural life cycle.

Such an 'absolute break' with 'traditional' temporal structures, in turn, reminds us of the fourth principle of Foucault's heterotopic discourse, a discourse that has been readily applied to studies of garden space.[131] As noted in chapter two, for Foucault, heterotopias are intrinsically linked to time, encapsulating either temporal discontinuity or accumulation, and

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[128] Holliday (1990), 556, for example, argues that it is 'through an infinitely repeatable ritual conducted at the *Ara Pacis*, the annually recurring *anniversarium sacrificium,* that Augustus wanted to secure immortality for his achievements; and Beard (1987), 9, similarly, suggests that it was 'almost as if the days marking the anniversaries of temples acted as a recurrent public reminder of Rome's past successes'.
[129] Holliday (1990): 544.
[130] Holliday (1990): 556. Cf. Elsner (1991), 55, on the play of time in the depiction of sacrifice; and Laurence (1993), 80, who argues that, in the performance of ritual, past and present become merged together to create a conception of time that is both enduring and static.
[131] Foucault (1986): 25-6. Cf. n. 36, 37, 38, chpt. 2.

such temporal discontinuity can certainly be seen in the construction of our two garden compositions – both the floral friezes and the garden room bring together different plants from different times into a single space that attempts to enclose the totality of time, a totality of time that itself is protected from time's erosion.[132] In this way, the hyperfertility of the garden compositions reminds us of Beth Lord's description of the heterotopic museum, worth quoting in full again here:[133]

> *[the museum] contains infinite time in a finite space, and it is both a space of time and a 'timeless' space. What makes it a heterotopia, then, appears to be threefold: its juxtaposition of temporally discontinuous objects, its attempts to present the totality of time, and its isolation, as an entire space, from normal temporal continuity.*

The *Ara Pacis*, then, in its commemorative function towards the Augustan regime, parallels the function of the museum in general terms, but it is in the temporal paradoxes of the floral friezes that we see the temporal paradoxes of the heterotopic discourse at full force. We should, therefore, view the magical synchronicity of the friezes as contributing to the overall message of the altar complex – as put forward by Holliday – which consistently challenges a straightforward understanding of time and its limits or boundaries.

The concept of boundaries also becomes important in the way the hyperfertile abundance within the two compositions is spatially represented. Evans' analysis of the *Ara Pacis* strikes me as a useful way of thinking about this issue.[134] She comments that, although the lower floral friezes represent a form of boundless fertility, it is telling that they are safely enclosed within the panels' borders, surmounted by orderly processions, and sealed in with scenes which freeze moments of Rome's mythic life – it is 'a vision of nature energetic and productive, yet ultimately strictly controlled by the forces of the Roman state'.[135] In fact, however wildly the floral elements appear to burst forth, the chaotic swirls of the lower friezes do appear to conform to a pattern when viewed from a distance [see Fig. 3.7]; and so, somewhat paradoxically, we are presented with a display of unrestrained natural elements within a composition that demonstrates clear overall order.[136]

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[132] Cf. Foucault (1998), 175-85, who uses the phrase 'temporal discontinuities' (*decoupages du temps*) to describe how heterotopias function as 'heterochronias'.
[133] Lord (2006): 3-4.
[134] See Evans (2003), repeated in Evans (2008), 21-4.
[135] Evans (2008): 22.
[136] Caneva (2010), 153-8 (esp. fig.71), takes this idea of ordering much further. She argues that many elements of the frieze follow Pythagorean geometric rules, in particular suggesting that the friezes demonstrate 'golden ratios', detectable from the positioning of the species and the 'golden rectangles' that can be reconstructed around certain acanthus spirals.

Similarly, Evans points to how this 'contained profusion' is also repeated in domestic settings, notably in the Roman garden and the wall paintings which represent them. Gardens and their artistic counterparts are seen as a nexus of contradictions, which deliver the 'illusion of spontaneous growth within a fabricated frame'.[137] Livia's Garden Room, with its juxtaposition of wild and tame elements, is no different in this respect. At first glance, the dense copse in the background may appear to be nothing more than a lush, tangled thicket, but elements in the foreground bring a sense of order and balance to the composition – not only do the four recessed trees provide a central focus to each 'panel', but the plants on the *ambulatio* (iris, ferns, ivy, and violets) are set out in parallel sequences on either side of the recesses.[138] More specifically, recent analysis by Gleason has demonstrated how the fictional plants of Livia's Garden Room show clear signs of the pruning methods used by the Romans in material gardens [see Fig. 3.26]:[139] for example, the citrus and pomegranate trees are pruned to remove the leader branches and open up the centre of the tree, leaving the fruit clustered at the very ends of the branches; and, despite its small size, the pine tree's foliage is mature, raising the potential that these are examples of miniaturised or dwarfed coniferous trees. This type of pruning or shaping thus falls under the new art of *nemora tonsilia* or *silva tonsilis*, initiated by Gaius Matius during the Augustan period, which focused on pruning groups of trees and shrubs for ornamental presentation.[140]

The notion of contained profusion seems particularly important for the 'Augustan' tone of both the floral friezes and the garden room. We may associate the initial display of hyperfertile abundance with the perfect harmony of the utopian Golden Age, but the overall order of the compositions actually distances them from the characteristics often ascribed to that paradisical Golden Age. Tibullus, for example, describes the Golden Age as boundary-free, stating that 'no house had doors' and 'no stone was fixed in the earth to determine the fixed boundary of the field'.[141] For Tibullus, the Golden Age is situated before human intervention with nature and the resultant fertile abundance is seen as spontaneous, whereas

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[137] Evans (2008): 22.

[138] Cf. Jones (2016), 59, on the tension between 'formal patterning and the naturalism of the local effects and textures, between aesthetic pleasure and reality effect' within the Garden Room.

[139] Gleason (2019). The author notes that the painting has been heavily restored, but the pruning marks she discusses can be seen in the photos taken pre-restoration by Gabriel (1955).

[140] See Plin. *Nat.* 12.13: *primus C. Matius ex equestri ordine, divi Augusti amicus, invenit nemora tonsilia intra hos lxxx annos/* Clipped arbours were invented within the last 80 years by a member of the Equestrian order named Gaius Matius, a friend of his late Majesty Augustus.
Gleason (2019) notes that this type of artistic rendering did not have to involve cutting plants into special shapes (like our modern understanding of topiary), but, rather, clipping and pruning to produce miniaturised trees and shrubs that could be densely arranged. This effect can clearly be seen in the lush thicket of Livia's Garden Room.

[141] Tib. 1.3.42-4: *non domus ulla fores habuit, non fixus in agris/ qui regeret certis finibus arva, lapis*. Cf. Lee-Stecum (1998), 115; and Evans (2008), 21.

the compositions, and especially the *Ara Pacis*, clearly demonstrate an element of restraint in their containment and order.

This sort of control can be seen as a mirror of the Augustan regime's control of sexuality, enshrined into law with the *Lex Iulia* in 18BC, just five years before the dedication of the *Ara Pacis*.[142] This law represented a 'major increase in state regulation of citizens' family lives', with clear privileges for 'acceptable' marriages and penalties for those 'who either did not marry, or married socially unacceptable partners', and also incentives to have children.[143] These laws, then, parallel the same close guard on fertility as is visually represented on the *Ara Pacis*, and it is perhaps no coincidence that Horace, writing during the Augustan age, used the term *fecundus* (fertile) to denote an 'era full of sin' when describing a wife who prostitutes herself out with her husband's full knowledge.[144] In order for the *Ara Pacis* to display the 'right kind' of Augustan paradise, then, it had to explicitly engage with the potential for dangerous overgrowth, and it does this through its connection to Livia's Garden Room and their shared contained profusion. As Evans has argued, like the Roman garden, the *Ara Pacis* determines strict limits for growth, providing the illusion of a spontaneous abundance that, in reality, could only be achieved by organisation.[145] The floral friezes, therefore, are not designed as an abstract utopian paradise from a mythical Golden Age but, rather, as a specifically 'Augustan' rendering of miraculous fecundity.

Ambiguous structures

The shared characteristics of hyperfertile abundance and contained profusion within the two compositions reveal a complex balancing act or perhaps even a deliberate collision of supposed antitheses – two types of co-existing temporal frameworks (calendrical and eternal) bound together in spaces that also represent a constant negotiation between discipline and

[142] The *lex Iulia de maritandis ordinibus* was introduced in 18BC, and later supplemented by the *lex Papia Poppaea* in AD 9. The two enactments are usually distinguished in the sense that the first encouraged marriage; the second, bearing children. On the statutes of these two laws, see McGinn (1998), 70-85. Dio (54.16; 56.1-10) offers accounts of the two enactments; cf. Kemezis (2007).
[143] Kemezis (2007): 274. Marriages across wide social status gaps were particularly penalised; for example, senatorial rank citizens were forbidden from marrying freedmen or freedwomen. McGinn (1998), 72, notes that these prohibitions illustrate the 'Roman tendency to merge categories of social (freedpersons) and moral (prostitutes)'.
[144] Hor. *Carm.* 3.6.17: *fecunda culpae saecula*.
[145] Evans (2008): 22-3. Cf. Favro (1996), 167f., on urban ensembles in Augustan Rome. Here, the author argues that Augustus favoured the creation of urban ensembles as they helped to unite the cityscape by symbolically presenting a sense of unity and cohesion; and introverted enclosures (in which she also includes *horti*) are seen as a particularly important part of the new order because, through their isolation from the visual contamination of other buildings, they are able to convey unadulterated propagandistic messages. On the importance of isolating experiences, see Vitr. *de Arch* 6.2.2, 6.5.2, and 7.pref.17.

excess. This balancing act highlights how the new Augustan age marked a turning point towards a 'boundless' prosperity, but also how this renewal and stability could not be possible without a distinct and essential order underpinning it. This notion of a specifically Augustan Golden Age relied on the careful renegotiation of normative categories, and the potent crux of this new ideology is summed up perfectly by Horace, who states that the sun rising over the 'new Rome' is 'ever new but changeless' (*aliusque et idem*).[146]

The fact that these ideas are visually encoded on the *Ara Pacis* through the use of a floral frieze should not, therefore, be surprising, since the connection to Livia's Garden Room reminds us that the garden is surely the perfect model for representing such a nexus of contradictions. Gardens, after all, can appear static at any particular moment and yet are also constantly evolving due to nature's cyclical system of growth and decay; and, by their very nature, gardens are an attempt by humans to place a level of control over a natural process that arguably remains unrestrained and spontaneous. It is clear that the two compositions reveal the importance of the balance between abundance and control in achieving both a garden-inspired and an Augustan theme. Furthermore, the power of the botanical images cannot be limited to the symbolic value of individual elements, since the compositional configurations of space and time, their construction and deconstruction, are crucial for creating the Augustan part of that symbolism. How, though, do these ideas extend to the structural principles embedded in each composition? Does the physical framing of the spaces continue to subvert normative categories? And, if these more formal framing strategies are ambiguous, how are such 'games of destabilisation, provocation, and metamorphoses' to be interpreted in the context of the Augustan regime?[147]

Returning to Livia's Garden Room first, the depiction of boundaries here perfectly exemplifies the ambiguous sense of separation between garden and not-garden. The multiple perimeters on display not only define the garden as 'different', but also highlight the complex relationship between the garden and 'wild' nature beyond. The garden room itself was a sunken one that could only be entered through a small archway after a series of narrow passageways [see Fig. 3.27]. Thus, the interior presents the occupant with a clear choice as to whether or not to enter it, and the crossing of the boundary into that space is emphasised by the special journey required to get there. This special enclosure of the garden room in turn reflects the commonly accepted definition of the garden as a space marked off for a particular purpose. However, the composition also demonstrates how the garden's enclosure is anything

[146] Hor. *Saec.* 10. Cf. Augustus' own claim at *RG* 34 that he exceeded all in *auctoritas* but none in *potestas* i.e. he was *primus inter pares.* Evans (2008), 21, notes that 'Golden Age discourses are employed…to contain the paradox of transformation and stability at a time when Rome demands both cures: paradise configures renewal of the most conservative kind'.
[147] Platt (2009): 45.

but straightforward. For, although this particular garden is positioned as part of a real interior space defined by its own concrete boundary wall, the unbroken and all-surrounding garden prospect we see in the room, bound neither by space nor time, 'effectively dissolves the wall (i.e. the boundary), transforming the space into an open-sided pavilion set in a paradise forest'.[148]

Upon closer inspection, the notion of boundaries is then complicated further still by the inclusion of multiple perimeters within the 'open-sided' painting itself. Not only do the physical walls of the room act as a boundary to the rest of the house, but there is also the low wickerwork fence that dominates the foreground of the paintings, and the stone parapet further in the distance [see Fig. 3.20]. Between the fence and the stone wall, the plants are arranged in an ordered display, with close-clipped grass and individually laid out plants; and yet, in complete contrast, just behind the parapet flourishes a tangled thicket of a variety of plants, trees, and bushes. Now, the inclusion of fences within interior garden paintings was certainly not unusual, but the inclusion of so many paradoxical boundaries within one composition presents the viewer with a unique view of the garden space.[149] By juxtaposing 'wild' and 'tame' elements of the composition in such a vivid way, the duality of the garden's enclosure is emphasized – the garden is enclosing the room, whilst also being enclosed by the rest of nature – and this, in turn, re-emphasises the complex relationship between balanced order and abundance that was so important in visually encoding the Augustan Golden Age.[150]

The use of these perimeters, however, also forces us to question exactly what constitutes the garden proper within the paintings, and where we are in relation to it. Initially, when we enter the room, the all-surrounding prospect and the physical structure of the interior walls leads a visitor to feel 'inside' the garden. However, upon closer inspection of the

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[148] Giesecke (2007): 123.

[149] The garden paintings on the inside of the House of the Fruit Orchard in Pompeii provide us with an excellent point of comparison. Here, the painting of the 'Blue' bedroom of the house (I.ix.5, room off atrium) features a lattice fence in the foreground of the composition, beyond which is a lush garden of trees and flowers; and, in the 'Black' bedroom (I.ix.5, room off east portico of peristyle), there is a fence featuring recessed niches, close clipped grass in the foreground, and a denser thicket beyond the perimeter. Although these paintings may appear to be the forerunners of Livia's Garden Room their lack of depth and the inclusion of vertical architectural borders creates the illusion of looking out into the garden, rather than being surrounded by it; and so the inclusion of multiple perimeters in Livia's Garden Room, coupled with the lack of architectural framing devices, appears to be a unique innovation. For the paintings in the House of the Fruit Orchard, see Jashemski (1979), 117-9; Leach (2004), 124; and Ling (1991), 150-1.

[150] A similar dual enclosure effect is created by the use of garden paintings on the walls of exterior and real garden spaces. For example, a drawing of a garden painting that was found in the back of a small garden excavated in 1839 clearly mirrors the composition of Livia's Garden Room in that it has a wall, in front of which is an ordered and symmetrical display of interspersed low and high plants, and beyond which is a thick 'wild' copse. Here, the physical wall encloses the real garden, whilst also enclosing the artistic garden within itself; and this artistic garden is then enclosed as part of the representation by the depiction of wild nature beyond, all the while also creating the illusion of extra space within the real garden. For a reproduction of this drawing, see Jashemski (1991), 66, pl.99.

painting's composition, we are, strictly speaking, actually *outside* the garden, looking *in*: if we follow the definition of the garden as a space marked off by a physical boundary, then the only part of the painting that is truly 'garden' is the close-clipped grass between the wicker and stone boundaries. Further complicating this inside/outside paradox is also the fact that, as a viewer of the painting, you undoubtedly include the 'wild' elements beyond the stone wall in your perception of the garden, therefore effectively dissolving the distinction between wild and tame as well.

The spatial complexities of the garden, as revealed by the multiple perimeters of Livia's Garden Room, are also evident in the structure of the *Ara Pacis*. For the *Ara Pacis* is separate from the rest of the urban space, yet still defined in relation to other monuments and its position within the Campus Martius, just as the garden is defined as separate but also perceived in relation to its surroundings. Like a garden, our understanding of the *Ara Pacis* as a sacred *templum*-like space hinges on its being set aside as a separate space and the enclosing boundary wall is the means for this particular separation. However, the floral friezes destabilise this straightforward sense of enclosure because of their dual status as two-dimensional framed ornament and three-dimensional frame for the altar itself. Even though the floral friezes are contained as part of the composition, it is this same 'garden' element that is also enclosing the rest of the sacred complex. In fact, the abundance and sheer size of the floral frieze actually creates the illusion that the garden has now become the supporting element of the entire enclosure. Is it possible for the frieze to be enclosed, enclosing, and a support all at the same time? The friezes' paradoxical status as both contained and container, and the consequent subversion of structural norms, thus mirrors the ambiguous spatial status of Livia's Garden Room and, indeed, garden space in general.

Platt's exploration of how we might define the 'marvellous' is especially relevant for my discussion here. Her 2009 article seeks to locate the semiotic slipperiness of the marvellous within Augustan visual culture, and asks to what extent these forms either destabilise the normative classicism of Augustan art, or offer an alternative through fanciful escapism. For Platt, although it may be defined formally as simply a disruption of the laws of nature, we should also define the marvellous in terms of its affective qualities and the impossibility of an explanation of these qualities; and it is this impossibility, this resistance to language, which, in turn, lends visual manifestations of the marvellous a certain ambiguity, in that they are 'resistant to conventional practices'.[151]

It is, of course, this type of resistance that has featured so heavily in the discussion of the two case studies thus far. As Platt demonstrates, the prescriptive treatises of Horace and

[151] Platt (2009): 45.

Vitruvius promote the idea that the marvellous (as *monstra*) embodies an 'aesthetic impulse that undermines the laws governing natural bodies and their organising systems', therefore 'generating a threat to the corporeal and structural integrity of the Augustan culture'.[152] In fact, Vitruvius particularly singles out vegetal and floral motifs as examples of this monstrous threat, focusing on their 'irrational' (*sine ratione*) use as structural elements within wall paintings – he argues that such images, although delightful to look at (*delectantur*), should not be tolerated because they transgress the rules of propriety and perspicuity as respects the subject.[153] What troubles Vitruvius the most, then, is not the use of such motifs *per se*, but, rather, the fact that such 'decorative' or 'ornamental' aspects have been reassigned to a structural role: the use of *monstra* as structural elements violates the Vitruvian principles of representational verisimilitude (*veritas*), rationality of design (*ratio*), and structural appropriateness (*decor*).[154] Within the context of his architectural treatise, Vitruvius thus aims to relegate the marvellous to one of two roles only – that of representational content or decorative motif.[155]

In this context, one would assume that Vitruvius would not have approved of the ambiguous status of the *Ara Pacis*' floral frieze. As part of the monumental structure, and a prominent part at that, the use of garden-inspired elements creates a 'play between the vegetal as structural or ornamental, and the vegetal as realistic or fantastical, in which the conventional categories of plausible structure and fantastical decoration' are subverted.[156] However, as we have seen through the comparison of the shared characteristics of our two compositions, the resultant ambiguity that Vitruvius attacks as a potentially destabilising force is also the very same factor that provides such an effective motif for the Augustan age:

> *When traditional mechanisms of power had literally been supplanted, it is not surprising that conventional representational categories were being radically rethought, especially when the new order sought both to emphasize the extraordinary status and to render such status normative.*[157]

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[152] Platt (2009): 58. The full analysis of *monstra* in Horace and Vitruvius can be found at pp. 51-8.
[153] Vitr. *de Arch* 7.5.3-4, transl. Platt (2009): *Neque enim picturae probari debent, quae non sunt similes veritati, nec, si factae sunt elegantes ab arte, ideo de his statim debet 'recte' iudicari, nisi, argumentationes certas rationes habuerint sine offensionibus explicates*/ For paintings that do not resemble reality should not be endorsed, nor, if artistic skill has made them elegant, should they be accordingly judged as 'correct', unless they conform to the specific requirements of their subject, executed without violation.
[154] Platt (2009): 56. *Monstra* are also in violation of some of the Vitruvian principles of architecture as set out in *de Arch* 1.2, namely order (*ordinatio*), arrangement (*dispositio*), and propriety (*decor*).
[155] Platt (2009): 62.
[156] Platt (2009): 65.
[157] Platt (2009): 74.

As part of the *Ara Pacis,* then, it is the very reimagining of the ornament as structure, its status as 'marvellous', that creates the perfect balance between hyperfertile abundance and contained profusion so essential to its interpretation.[158] The entire composition's resistance to conventional categories simultaneously promotes an Augustan 'message', but also consistently fights a totalising discourse. To put it another way, the 'message' itself is not ambiguous – in that we know it is Augustan – but that same 'Augustanism' is actually built on, and relies on, normative dichotomies and categorisations not applying. Garden-inspired imagery, then, with its heterotopic destabilising of time and space, provides the perfect vehicle for this type of messaging.

Gardens and Sacred Groves – The *Ara Pacis* as a *lucus*

My discussion thus far has demonstrated what we might call the 'formal framing strategies' of my two case studies. By examining the ways in which boundaries are constructed, represented, and contested within each composition, and how these boundaries reflect the ideological principles of the Augustan regime, I have highlighted how the physical frames on display have the power to 'make visible the conceptual frameworks structuring [these] visual representation[s]'.[159] My comparison of Livia's Garden Room and the floral friezes of the *Ara Pacis* has also demonstrated how Augustus' botanic mythology was transformed into a series of evocative visual stimuli that harnessed the ambiguities of garden space as a messaging vehicle for the paradoxes of the new political system.

Finally, then, I would like to return the *Ara Pacis* to its physical location within the Campus Martius, that 'most holiest' landscape discussed at the opening of this chapter, and reconsider its position as part of the landscape in light of my analysis. In this way, I seek to move beyond the purely visual and re-frame the floral friezes as part of carefully constructed spatial relationships within the landscape of Augustan Rome. My comparison to Livia's Garden Room focused on the *Ara Pacis'* similarities to garden space, but how do these similarities sit with the complex's function as an altar space within the Campus Martius? How should we interpret the suggested intersection between garden space and sacred space? And

[158] Cf. Platt and Squire (2017), 81-2: 'it is perhaps ironic that the very 'parergonality' of this most canonical of Roman *erga* has proven an enduring challenge for art historians, who have struggled to explain the visual dominance of the enclosure's elaborate vegetal frieze. Reframed as itself a frame, the 'decorative' quality of such vegetal forms need not be problematic…rather, it is a reminder that concepts of the frame – just as those of 'ornament' – are always culturally embedded…Indeed, the Augustan Principate's ability to reframe its audience's understanding of political acts and institutions to a new ideological and aesthetic framework…was arguably key to its enduring success'.
[159] Platt and Squire (2017): 74. Cf. Bal (2002), 133-73, on 'framing' vs. 'context': frames do not provide inert 'contexts' for their works but, rather, they constitute 'dynamic acts', themselves determined by all manner of social, cognitive, communicative, and physical framings.

what impact does this intersection have on our understanding of the complex within the wider landscape of the Campus Martius? As an alternative, but complementary, interpretation to previous approaches, I would like to end by reframing the *Ara Pacis* as a sacred grove (*lucus*) or planted temple enclosure dedicated to Augustus, and one that forms a central part of the construction of the new sacral-idyllic cityscape of Rome.

As my introduction to this chapter set out, Augustus consciously set out to 'open up' Rome to the people during his Principate, and a key part of this approach was the public benefaction of garden (or more broadly, green) space within the city. This strategy, in turn, found a happy medium between the two diametrically opposed views of garden space that had taken hold during the Late Republic. Augustus' green spaces were neither the morally dubious and luxurious *horti* of the elite, nor were they that lesser 'poor man's farm', the *hortus*. Instead, Augustus appeared to tap in to the religious associations of green space by counteracting the disappearance of sacred landscapes through the redevelopment of the Campus Martius as a sacral-idyllic landscape park; and, underpinning all of this, was the creation of botanic mythology that established and promoted a divine affinity between Augustus and trees.

It was certainly not unconventional for Augustus to align his green-scaping with these sacred or religious associations. As previously discussed in the survey of different types of gardens within Roman thought, Roman religion was deeply connected to agricultural and vegetal deities; and, thus, it comes as no surprise that *religio*, the sense of divine reverence, also extended to many garden spaces.[160] At its most primitive level, the association between natural spaces and divine presences seems to stem from Pliny the Elder's assertion that trees occupied an honourable place within the system of nature:[161]

> *Haec fuere numinum templa, priscoque ritu simplicia rura etiam nunc deo praecellentem arborem dicant.*
>
> The trees formed the first temples of the gods, and even at the present day, the country people, preserving in all their simplicity their ancient rites, consecrate the finest among their trees to some divinity.

[160] On the extent to which the Romans perceived the divine in nature, see Rives (2007).
[161] Plin. *Nat.* 12.3 (cf. Sen. *Ep.* 41.3; Ov. *Met.* 3.155-62; *Fast.* 3.295-6). For a comprehensive exploration of sacred trees in the Roman world, see Hunt (2016) – on this passage in Pliny, she notes (187) that claiming that something is a temple of a deity does not have to entail that the deity lives in it, pervades it, or animates it.

This connection is then developed into the more specific category of the *lucus*, a wood, grove, or thicket of trees sacred to a deity:[162]

> *nec magis auro fulgentia atque ebore simulacra quam lucos et in iis silentia ipsa adoramus.*
>
> Indeed, we find ourselves inspired by adoration, not less by the sacred groves and their very stillness than by the statues of the gods.

Such groves tend to be singled out as 'inherently or *de facto* sacred':[163] although they may not be formally dedicated or consecrated to a god by a magistrate, they were set-aside in the minds of the Romans and perceived (and perhaps, more crucially, maintained) as sacred due to their numinous quality.[164] Indeed, Bodel argues that what makes an object or space sacred is someone *conceptually* setting it aside.[165]

The notion of an idealised connection between nature and the gods, as represented by the *lucus*, was also replicated in a more concrete form through the creation of planted temple enclosures. Depictions on Roman coins and illustrated maps show that temples were regularly flanked by trees and situated within a colonnaded grove:[166] three sites at Pompeii demonstrate the existence of a sacred grove – the Sanctuary of Venus, the Temple of Dionysus at Sant' Abbondio, and the Temple of Apollo;[167] and, in Rome, we find a temple dedicated to Venus Erycina within the *horti* of Sallust, as well as evidence for the worship of Phoebus Apollo/Pallas Athena and Venus in the *horti* of Maecenas and Caesar, respectively.[168] Such planted temple enclosures can generally be characterised by a formal *porticus* structure, usually in a tripartite form, with tree plantings that correspond to the columns. Augustus' victory monument at Nikopolis, for example, built to celebrate his victory at Actium, was laid out as a *porticus triplex* with an altar at the centre of the courtyard space – this precinct was

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[162] The Latin term *lucus* is particularly difficult to define. For a close analysis of the meaning of *lucus* in the ancient sources, see Scheid (1993). For its use in literature, see e.g. Livy 24.3; Hor. *Ep.* 1,6,32; and Prop. 4.9. Some authors make a distinction between a more 'natural' *lucus* and a 'constructed' *nemus*: Servius (1.310) defines both the terms, stating that *lucus enim est arborum multitudo cum religione, nemus vero composita multitudo arborum, silva diffusa et inculta*; cf. Tib. 3.3.15 (*nemora in domibus sacros imitantia lucos*). However, I would agree with Rüpke (2007a), 275, who finds Servius' distinction 'too artificial'.

[163] Hunt (2016): 126.

[164] Rives (2012), 165, draws a distinction between 'the sacred as defined by human authority and the sacred as more or less spontaneously perceived', with groves belonging to the latter category.

[165] Bodel (2009): 26-30. Cf. Macrobius 3.3.2, who defines the sacred as *quicquid est quod deorum habetur*/ whatever is considered to belong to the gods.

[166] See Levi and Levi (1967), 154-8, pl.9; Scar (1982), no.4142; Wroth (1899), no.29, pl.16.13; and *ibid.* no.46, pl.16.14.

[167] On the Sanctuary of Venus, see Carroll (2011); on the Temple of Dionysus, see Jashemski (1979), 157-8; and on the Temple of Apollo, see Carroll and Godden (2000).

[168] Brundrett (2011): 57.

open at one end, and ceramic planting pots have been found inserted in to the ground parallel to all three porticoes.

In all of these cases, then, it appears that 'only in mythical retrospective' did religious experiences of nature ever take place in completely untouched wilderness – in reality, they always happened in 'more-or-less ordered environments, in nature treated or tamed by human hands'.[169] At the most basic level, natural spaces believed to be 'auto-consecrated' were conceptually set aside in order to maintain their inherent relationship with the divine *numen*. This intrinsic relationship between nature and the divine was then replicated through the construction of formal temple enclosures featuring clearly designed plantings. Furthermore, regulations found in sacral law highlight that the establishment of precise property borders was of fundamental importance to such sanctuaries: the designated plot of land was set aside by the means of ritual *effatio*, and then fenced off in order to enact the transfer into its new sacred use; and the frequent references to fences, walls, and gates on inscriptions finds an obvious parallel in the importance of boundary elements to delineate and define garden space.[170] Thus, as a form of constructed nature, based on the fundamental action of 'cutting out' a specific area of land and designating it as 'other', such sacred groves clearly fall under our definition of garden space.

Interestingly, Livia's Garden Room has been read in the context of such sacred groves before.[171] As was previously discussed in the introductory comments on the room, the painting has been interpreted in the context of sacral-idyllic landscapes due to its inherent idealised or paradisiacal nature. Kellum, meanwhile, in the opening paragraph of her article, contextualises her approach to the room in relation to the fabric of the Augustan city, where 'sacred groves and individual trees provided not only much-needed shade and urban punctuation, but also a living link with the purity of the city's primeval past'.[172]

It seems odd, then, that, despite its connection to Livia's Garden Room and its fundamental function as a sacred altar, the *Ara Pacis* has not been interpreted more explicitly in the context of sacred groves. In fact, although we, as modern viewers, are able to use the similarities between the *Ara Pacis* and the Livia's Garden to inform our interpretation of the floral friezes, would Roman viewers have been able to use the same interpretative process?

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[169] Neudecker (2015): 220. Cf. Hughes (1994), 170, who argues that sacred enclosures were wilderness 'in the sense of being preserved by changes wrought by humans', but not wilderness 'in the sense of regions that lack human activity'.
[170] Neudecker (2015): 222.
[171] Reeder (2001): 75-94.
[172] Kellum (1994b): 221. Cf. Flory (1989), 354-6, who notes that the names, locations, and histories of sacred groves and individual trees were frequently associated with the legendary founders and heroes of Rome; and, similarly, such spaces feature prominently in the *Aeneid* (e.g. 3.300-5; 5.755-61; 9.581-5).

Would the average Roman citizen have ever seen the room? Based on the presumed lack of access to it, I would have to argue no; and, if we are going to think about the multiple interpretations open to individual viewers, then we must surely consider how the floral friezes would be read in light of the interpretive aids actually available to contemporary Romans.

The intersection between garden space and sacred space represented by the structure, its location within the new Campus Martius sacral-idyllic park, and the underlying botanic mythology represented within its imagery all point to the notion of the precinct as akin to that more formal type of grove, the planted temple enclosure. This interpretation also accounts for the paradox of a dominating garden-inspired frieze that surrounds or, potentially, supports the entire altar structure – rather than being enclosed within a boundary, planted temple enclosures demonstrate that garden space can also be an *enclosing* structure that surrounds a space.

Finally, the reframing of the *Ara Pacis* as a sacred grove enhances both the political and the sacred dimensions of the altar complex – it should not be viewed exclusively as an altar to peace or just a piece of propagandistic art, for it is a concrete monument that transcended the transient nature of green space elsewhere in the city. The garden-inspired frieze can, of course, be understood as a symbol of Augustus' botanic mythology and, thus, a key aspect of the Augustan system of visual communication; and, long after the physical gardens and groves of this period changed owners, changed imagery, or even just disappeared altogether, the *Ara Pacis* represented a concrete reminder of the utilisation of garden space during the Principate. However, as a marble manifestation of the *lucus*, the altar complex can also be understood outside of an Augustan context – you do not need to be able to interpret the Augustan 'message' in order to identify or appreciate this sacred association. Thus, if we understand the *Ara Pacis* as a monumental sacred grove, the altar maintains its connection to garden space beyond an exclusively Augustan reading, and it is the co-existence of these broad and specific framings that ultimately lead to the success of the monument as such an evocative piece.

In my analysis of Virgil and Columella's gardening texts, it became clear that the supplementary classification of those texts demonstrated the interstitial nature of garden space in that it sat neither truly inside nor outside of agriculture in its manifestation of the *hortus*. In this chapter, then, even when garden-inspired spaces moved from a marginal position to take centre stage as part of a new political regime, the associated imagery still challenged straightforward delineations in its destabilisation of normative categories of time and space. The Augustan botanical motifs thus also highlighted the heterotopic discourse of garden

space, where binaries are held in productive suspension. What happens, though, when we take this destabilising and paradoxical imagery and integrate it into the domestic context of elite ornamental villas? How does this affect our perception of the spaces that we find there? And, if garden boundaries are repeatedly contested, how are we able to establish a clear sense of division between what is inside or outside any individual space? Do we even need to be able to divide them? With these questions in mind, I now turn to my final pair of case studies, Villa A at Oplontis and the villa letters of Pliny the Younger (2.17 and 5.6), in order to explore the issues raised thus far in the specific context of elite Roman villa culture.

Chapter Five

The Framed View: Villa A at Oplontis and Pliny the Younger

As the all-surrounding, visually enticing frescoes of Livia's Garden Room suggested, elite Romans of the Late Republic and Early Empire took clear delight in decorating interior rooms with illusionistic garden prospects that played with a viewer's sense of time and space. Furthermore, the detailed rendering of the individual plants, trees, and birds, the symbolism of the botanical elements, and the owner of its villa location have all contributed to this fictive representation becoming one of *the* icons of Roman art history and of garden paintings in general;[1] and, in a similar way to the impact of Virgil's garden *excursus* on literary representations of garden space, the room has become, intentionally or not, a starting point or frame of reference for the vast majority of scholarship on Roman garden paintings. However, despite its iconic status, Livia's Garden Room is, in many ways, unusual in its composition and layout. In particular, the combination of its underground and completely interiorised location, the unbroken and all-surrounding prospect, and the lack of vertical architectural supports within the garden scene results in a distinctly unique experience for any visitor.

A close parallel to Livia's Garden Room, though, can provide us with a more 'typical' example of Roman garden paintings within an elite domestic context. Painted just a few decades later than the Prima Porta site, in the early to mid-first century AD, the garden scenes of the *triclinium-nymphaeum* complex in the House of the Golden Bracelet (VI. 17) at Pompeii showcase the same skilled rendering of naturalistic plant forms and many of the same compositional features as discussed in chapter four; but, additionally, they also demonstrate how Romans of this period regularly integrated such fictive displays into real garden spaces as well.

Located at the rear of a three-storey structure, the dining area of the House of the Golden Bracelet features a painted chamber that opens out onto a planted garden with views of the bay below [see Fig. 4.1]. Excavations of this garden suggest it featured a geometric planting design of slightly raised beds at each corner, perhaps defined by box hedges, and complemented by fruit-laden branches trained to climb up the exterior walls.[2] The centrepiece of the garden is undoubtedly the lavish fountain that flows into a rectangular pool below, also fitted with jets to continue the bubbling water effect.[3] The arched apse behind the fountain is

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[1] For example, Kuttner (1999), 7, references the space as '*the* garden room'; Giesecke (2001), 22, calls it 'perhaps the finest exemplar' of 'the garden painting proper'; and Bergmann (2018), 287, also notes that it is 'the most famous interior painted garden'.
[2] On the House of the Golden Braclet *triclinium-nymphaeum* complex, see Bergmann (2008), 58-9; *ead.* (2018), 291-2; and Guzzo (2003), 402-3.
[3] The rectangular pool features twenty-eight water jets; see *PPM* 6, 137.

decorated with a mosaic featuring two large panels bordered by geometric designs, each depicting a lush green garden behind a lattice work fence, and set against a vibrant blue background. The mosaic panels also feature a central fictive fountain, thus mirroring the real fountain that once flowed in front.

To further complement the landscaped greenery in the exterior space, and the garden-themed mosaic within the *nymphaeum*, a chamber to the north of the garden features a set of incredibly well-preserved garden frescoes [see Fig. 4.2].[4] This narrow chamber had a white marble floor interspersed with coloured fragments and a vaulted mosaic ceiling depicting a rose trellis, with all four walls painted with garden scenes.[5] As Bergmann has noted, the density of detail and high quality of workmanship in this chamber far surpasses other Pompeian examples;[6] and, in this way, it is reminiscent of the design and quality of the frescoes in Livia's Garden Room. In fact, the walls of this vaulted chamber feature many of the same stylistic features of the Prima Porta site. For example, the garden scene is filled with a dense and lush set of plantings featuring a huge number of diverse, naturalistically-rendered, and identifiable plant species (laurel, poppy, date, palm, oleander, viburnum, periwinkles, plane, ivy, roses, pine, violets, and calendula, to name a few), all separated from the viewer by a horizontal fence. In the centre of the scene is the familiar marble water basin, enjoyed by one of the many birds that populate the composition (nightingale, rook, pigeon, jay, water rail, oriole, thrush, blackbird, and partridge). Flanking the water basin are two features unique to this particular garden painting, designed to mirror the marble statuary so often found in Roman gardens – fictive pilasters, topped by herms (one of a young girl and one of a satyr), which, in turn, support *pinakes* displaying reclining and semi-nude maenads. These garden scenes are then topped by an expanse of blue sky, featuring a series of hanging masks.

The coherence of the design, then, across the entire *triclinium-nymphaeum* site – particularly the vibrant colour combinations of glistening white marble, lush greenery, and deep blues – must have created a visual delight; and the fluidity between the interior and exterior garden spaces was surely an integral part of any individual's experience of the complex. The integration of garden paintings and mosaics into this linked indoor-outdoor space thus represents the most common trend across the remains of ancient Roman domestic sites, in that the fictive representations of gardens embellish the walls of spaces already partially open to exterior landscaped space. In this way, such murals differ from the interiorised example of Livia's Garden Room by providing an opportunity for painters and viewers to create 'interactions between the painted illusion and its immediate natural

[4] This chamber can also be seen on the left side of the fountain apse in Fig. 4.1.
[5] On the garden paintings, see Settis (2002).
[6] Bergmann (2018): 292.

context';[7] and, although 'one wonders how the verdant garden frescoes…[of Livia's Garden Room]… might have complemented or competed with the planted precincts above ground', the play between the real and the fictive, the interior and exterior, is most obvious within the multimedia environments of sites such as the House of the Golden Bracelet.[8] Furthermore, such integrated displays also bring into focus a pertinent question about the purpose of garden paintings in elite domestic settings: clearly, at both the Villa of Livia and the House of the Golden Bracelet, the owners had the means *and* the space to create lavish landscaped and cultivated green spaces – so, if paintings aren't included *in lieu* of real garden space, what is their function? What do garden paintings contribute to the experience of the owner and/or visitor when real garden space is also readily available?

It is in this context, and with these questions in mind, that I now turn to the analysis of my final two case studies – Villa A at Oplontis, and the villa letters of Pliny the Younger (2.17 and 5.6) – in order to explore integrated and multimedia garden environments within some of the most lavish domestic settings of the Roman world, namely the ornamental villa gardens of elite Romans along the Bay of Naples. Indeed, my choice of case studies for this exploration is primarily driven by their huge scope. Villa A, for example, preserved in the Vesuvian eruption of AD 79, features an unprecedented amount of garden spaces and paintings in one site; and the coherence and consistency of design, coupled with the authorities' decision to leave the majority of the paintings *in situ*, creates a unique opportunity to analyse and visualise a villa space as close to what was originally intended as possible. Pliny the Younger, meanwhile, provides us with the first full-scale descriptions of ornamental villa gardens and, as such, has become the quintessential model against which Roman villas and their gardens have been measured. Although the letters post-date the Vesuvian eruption by almost thirty years, they 'crystallize imperial villa culture' during the first century AD, and therefore offer a significant literary reception of many of the principles we see in Villa A.[9]

In line with the focus of the previous two chapters, this chapter will primarily focus on the ways in which garden boundaries operate across my two case studies by questioning the extent to which elite Romans of the early imperial period regarded their villa gardens as objects of artificially constructed viewpoints, and exploring the impact of this framing (both metaphorical and physical) on our perception of these spaces. More specifically, I will demonstrate how the garden boundary operates as a porous membrane within the villa, a membrane that mediates between a series of oppositions – not only inside and outside, but

[7] Bergmann (2018): 295.
[8] The Villa of Livia included a huge outdoor porticoed terrace garden (c.68m long and 74m wide), with views of the Tiber, the city of Rome, and the Alban Hills. On the archaeology of the villa site and its outdoor garden spaces, cf. n.77, chpt. 4.
[9] Young (2015): 110.

also architecture and horticulture, and art and nature – and how this blurring of distinctions creates garden spaces that consistently multiply the perspectives on offer. I will thus display how the garden boundary, functioning as a frame, draws attention to itself, whilst also deconstructing itself, to the point where the garden can simultaneously be a framed space and the frame itself.

By focusing on elite ornamental villa gardens, I thus conclude Part Two by 'completing' my overall analysis across the three broad sub-categories of Roman garden space identified in chapter one – agricultural (chapter three), sacred (chapter four), and now domestic. As with the previous two chapters, I have chosen to explore one type of garden through the comparative analysis of two exemplars. However, unlike the previous chapters, the two case studies here are clearly not like-for-like. In order to analyse the category of the *hortus*, I compared two literary representations of the space; and, for my analysis of Augustan sacred space, I compared two artistic representations of gardens. Here, though, I have the opportunity to compare the same type of garden across literary, artistic, and archaeological evidence. Although, as Bergmann has noted, it is tempting to see these different types of media as 'existing in alignment, as mutual confirmation of a a cultural phenomenon', it is important to remember that they can also be contradictory; thus, my comparative analysis will follow her approach, in that I will argue for neither confirmation or contradiction, but, instead, hope to expose 'parallels in order to raise larger questions about representation, aesthetic experience, and environmental values' that inform the creation of villa gardens.[10] In this way, then, chapter five provides a fitting conclusion to my multimedia analysis of Roman garden space in that it allows me truly to 'test' how various concepts translate or operate across different media platforms that are supposedly representing the same ideas. Before I begin this analysis, though, let me first introduce my two case studies more thoroughly.

Villa A at Oplontis

Villa A at Oplontis, or the 'Villa of Poppaea', is located in the modern town of Torre Annunziata, fourteen miles south of Naples and three miles north of Pompeii, along the Bay of Naples [see Fig. 4.3].[11] The villa is one of several large establishments in the area buried by

[10] Bergmann (2002): 87. The author's argument here is reminiscent of the framework provided by Soja's Thirdspace, as discussed in chapter two, which encourages us to 'locate' the 'true essence' of the garden the space *between* the material and the representational.

[11] For treatments of the villa, see e.g. Alessio (1965); Bracco (1975); de Franciscis (1973); *id.* (1975) *id.* (1982); Tybout (1979); D'Ambrosio et al. (2003); Clarke and Munstasser (2014); and Gazda and Clarke (2017). It should be noted that there is also a second complex at Oplontis, located 300m to the east of Villa A, often referred to as 'Villa B'. Despite the close location to Villa A, it was clear to excavators from the outset that this was a very different sort of site – initially, it was thought to be a

the Vesuvian eruption of AD79, and it typifies many of the characteristics of setting, architecture, and decor that we have come to associate with Roman luxury villas and the life of *otium* along the coast.[12]

Both the name 'Oplontis' and the villa's ownership are somewhat mysterious. There is only one mention of the place in the ancient sources, on the Peutinger Table (itself a thirteenth century copy of a fourth century road map).[13] Here, on the section of the map that depicts the Bay of Naples, the word 'Oplontis' labels the cartographic symbol of a square portico with two towers, and it denotes the location as being approximately three miles from Pompeii. In terms of ownership, scholars have tended to attribute the villa to Poppaea Sabina, consort of the emperor Nero from AD62, on the basis of three pieces of evidence: first, an inscription on an amphora that states '*[se]cundo Poppaea*' ('to Secundus, slave of Poppaea'); second, a wine-jar stamped with the name '*L. Arriani [A]mphorius*', a possible reference to a brickworks, or *figlina Arriana*, that Poppaea supposedly owned in the suburbs of Pompeii; and, third, a piece of graffiti that reads 'may Beryllos be remembered', likely a reference to a Jewish freedman of Nero, mentioned by Flavius Josephus.[14] However, as with all the archaeological finds of this area, it is virtually impossible to be certain of a connection to Poppaea herself.[15]

It is quite difficult to imagine the once-impressive original setting of Villa A. Now more than 500m inland, and buried within the urban fabric of the modern town, this ancient maritime villa once perched on the edge of the ancient coastline, some 14m above the beach.[16] The remains of the villa suggest a multi-storeyed structure at the intersection of countryside

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villa rustica, similar to the one close by at Boscoreale, but the artifacts found in the main building, along with its general setting and architecture, have led scholars to believe it was one of the facilities that played a role in the regional wine trade. On the Oplontis 'B' site, see van der Graaff (2017), 69-71; Thomas (2017); Muslin (2017); and Ward (2017b). Due to the commercial nature of the site, I will not be including it in my discussions of ornamental green spaces in this chapter.

[12] Gazda (2017): 34. Several other well-known villas are located close by – the Villa of the Mysteries, just outside of Pompeii; the Villa of Publius Fannius Synistor at Boscoreale; the Villa of the Papyri at Herculaneum; and the Villa of San Marco and Villa Arianna at Stabiae. For a brief comparison of the general features of these surrounding villas with Villa A, see Gazda (2017), 36-44. For a general assessment of the villas of the area, see Dobbins and Foss (2007), 435-54. Zarmakoupi (2014) provides a detailed comparative analysis of porticoed gardens in the Villa of the Papyri, Villa A at Oplontis, Villa Arianna A, Villa Arianna B, and Villa San Marco. Cf. pp. 26-29, chpt.1, on villa gardens.

[13] On the Peutinger Table, see Levi and Levi (1967); Bosio (1983); and Talbert (2010).

[14] de Franciscis (1979) first put forward the theory of Poppaea's ownership. For a review of the evidence, see Beard (2008), 46-7. It was not unusual for women to own a villa, since women could and did acquire property by purchase and/or inheritance. Varro, for example, addresses the first book of his *Res Rustica* to his wife, Fundania, who apparently needed advice on how to cultivate the estate she had bought.

[15] The abundance of references in ancient literature to villas in the Campanian region make it tempting to attach the names of known villa owners to particular archaeological sites. For an appendix of the literary references to villa owners, see D'Arms (1970), 171-232.

[16] For the geoarchaeology of the ancient Oplontis coastline, see di Maio (2014); and Munstasser and di Maio (2017). Cf. 'Maritime Villa' painting in the House of the Citharist at Pompeii (I.4.5, *oecus* 18).

and sea. The location provided panoramic views of the sea to the south and Vesuvius to the north, and the site also aligned with the larger landscape through a pattern of centuriation (its east-west axis following major arteries into outer towns and connecting with other suburban villas).[17] This positioning within the wider Campanian landscape reflects many of the criteria of the 'ideal villa', as set out by Latin writers from the second-century BC onwards: Cato, for example, states that an estate should lie at the foot of a mountain and face south, and be near a flourishing town, or the sea, or a navigable stream, or a good or much-travelled road;[18] and Varro not only supports Cato's suggestion, but also argues for an east-west orientation in order to optimise sunlight and observation.[19]

Just as impressive as its location is the scale of Villa A. The excavated area covers approximately 8500 square metres, and consists of 99 excavated spaces; and, yet, this is only part of the original estate, since at least half is still either situated under modern streets or was destroyed by the construction of the Sarno Canal in the sixteenth-century. Excavations of the site suggest it originated in the middle of the first-century BC – a foundation wall in the north-east corner of the east peristyle marks the original limit of the villa – and was then gradually refurbished and enlarged over time in three main building phases [see Fig. 4.3].[20] The first phase, dating from c.50-40BC, consisted of a *domus*-like core centred on *atrium* 5, and included dining and reception rooms (14, 15, 23), bedrooms (11, 12), and two enclosed *viridia* (16, 20). This *atrium* core was then expanded on during the Augustan period, when porticoes on the north and south were built, and a bath complex (8, 17, 18 – later refurbished as an entertainment suite), and a kitchen (7) were added. The third phase occurred in the mid-first-century AD, when a wing was added to the east, extending out towards the north of the old core and creating an enclosure for a large park-like garden at the north. It has been assumed that a west wing was also created at this time due to the symmetrical alignment of the north garden, but this is not conclusive, and questions have been raised on account of the

[17] Oettel (1996) dates this pattern to the third centuriation of 42BC, following an earlier second one in 80BC. For a clear picture of the centuriation of this area, see *The Barrington Atlas of the Greek and Roman World* (2000), 44.
[18] Cato, *Agr.* 1.3.
[19] Var. *R.* 1.7.1-4; 1.16.1-3. The 'ideal villa' was also visually represented from the first-century AD, when miniaturist landscape paintings seem to reflect contemporary villa architecture – see, for example, a painting of a multi-storeyed seaside villa set against a countryside backdrop in the *tablinum* of the House of Lucretius Fronto at Pompeii (V.4a). On 'villa paintings', see Rostovtzeff (1904); Bergmann (1991); and Lafon (1991).
[20] For a summary of the renovation phases, see Zarmakoupi (2014), 48-52. Villa A was first 'excavated' in the eighteenth-century, when the Bourbon King Charles VII and his son Ferdinand hired 'archaeologists' to tunnel through the volcanic debris at various villa sites along the Bay of Naples in order to retrieve valuable antiquities and map out the region. The initial tunneling at Oplontis was carried out in 1839-40; but it was not until the 1960s, under the guidance of Italian archaeologists, that full-scale excavations were initiated and the full extent of the villa was properly revealed, as documented by de Franciscis (1973) and *id.* (1975). For an overview of the excavations between 1964 and 1968, see Clarke (2014); and, for the 2006-2015 seasons, see van der Graaf (2017).

dissimilarity in the arrangement of the rooms to the east and west of the *atrium*. Finally, excavations suggest that a fourth phase of renovations and repairs were ongoing at the time of the Vesuvian eruption of AD79, possibly as a result of damage from the earlier earthquake of AD62; and it appears that nobody was living in the villa during the renovations, since no human remains nor furniture have survived.[21]

Complementing the villa's grandiose architecture were a vast number of interior and exterior garden spaces, all of which were initially excavated by the pioneer of garden archaeology, Wilhelmina Jashemski.[22] Jashemski documented thirteen garden spaces within the villa, an unprecedented amount for a single complex (and this, of course, excludes the potential of an unearthed west wing), and she was able confidently to reconstruct the gardens' design and plantings through the study of root cavities, planting pots, and soil, pollen, and plant analysis.[23] In fact, as Gleason notes, Oplontis provides optimal conditions for garden archaeology, because the best conditions for recovering gardens buried by Vesuvius are found immediately after the removal of lapilli, and before the daily processes of weathering resume. Whereas the majority of gardens at Pompeii had been previously excavated and often replanted before Jashemski began her analysis, the gardens at Oplontis were often analysed directly after the removal of lapilli or, even in the worst cases, within two years.[24]

Finally, one of the most exciting aspects of Villa A is the extensive collection of frescoes still preserved. Out of the ninety-nine excavated spaces at the site, sixty have preserved painted surfaces (either walls, columns, ceilings, or floors);[25] and, more specifically, for the purpose of this study, sixteen of these spaces have wall paintings featuring either 'garden' scenes or, at the very least, representations of plants.[26] Furthermore, out of the four canonical styles of wall painting, only the First Style (200-80BC) does not

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[21] Compare this with the fifty four skeletons discovered in room 10 at the Oplontis 'B' site, suggesting that this complex was very much in 'active use' at the time of the eruption – see Thomas (2017), 161-2. Cf. Ward (2017), who considers the different ways in which the jewelry found with these skeletons can inform us on the site's use by people of different socioeconomic backgrounds.

[22] Jashemski's excavation of the gardens at Oplontis began in 1974, and they are documented in Jashemski (1987), and *ead.* (1993), 292-301. Reconstruction drawings of select gardens can also be found in Förtsch (1993), pl. 13-2-3. Gleason (2014) offers an overview of the excavations and archaeological methods used by Jashemski during the 1974-8 seasons.

[23] Villa A is one of only two grand villas – along with Villa Arianna at Stabiae – along the Bay of Naples (and outside of Pompeii) that preserve evidence of extensive formal gardens. For an overview of the four porticoed gardens at Villa A, see Zarmakoupi (2014), 249-254.

[24] Gleason (2014): para. 955.

[25] On the wall paintings at Oplontis, see e.g. de Franciscis (1975); Barbet (1985); Ehrhardt (1987); Clarke (1987); *id.* (1996); *id.* (2015); and Gee (2014); *ead.* (2017); *ead.* (forthcoming).

[26] Traces of illusionistic garden paintings survive in two main areas of the villa – the unroofed garden room 20, and a series of garden courtyards in the east wing (68-87) – and there are also other partial painted garden on the low wall of the service courtyard (32) and the exterior walls of room 78. On the garden paintings in particular, see Jashemski (1979), 290-2; *ead.* (1993), 375-6; Michel (1980), 393-4; and Bergmann (2017); *ead.* (forthcoming). On the integration of landscape paintings into the overall architectural design of the villa, see Zarmakoupi (2014), 122-127.

appear as it predates the villa as we know it.[27] The collection thus provides us with an opportunity to see the changing fashions and shifting tastes within a single complex: Second Style paintings, dating from c.50BC, and thus contemporary with the initial construction of the villa, are located in *atrium* 5, *cubiculum* 11, *triclinium* 14, *oecus* 15, and *triclinium* 23; Third Style paintings, dating to c.AD 1-15, are found in rooms 8, 10, 12, 17, 25, and 30; and, finally, the predominant Fourth Style decoration, dating from between AD 45 and 79, is featured in nearly forty separate rooms.[28] Many of the oldest rooms also feature a combination of older and newer styles, and, as Gee notes, the evidence of retention and restoration in these examples demonstrates the owner's desire to 'maintain the integrity of the visual fabric of the villa over time' – the fact that older paintings were either replaced, refreshed, or restored speaks to their status as 'markers of prestige', as well as the villa's long life.[29] Furthermore, the authorities' decision to leave the paintings *in situ* allows us, even as modern visitors, to gain a unique insight into how these paintings were 'built in' to the fabric of the villa and the visitor's experience of it.[30]

Thus, the combination of the sheer scale of Villa A, the preservation of its garden spaces, and the continued presence of wall paintings allows us to make observations at this site rarely possible about multimedia environments created by the Romans in their own land – the consistency and coherence of the architecture, painted designs, and garden spaces create a unique opportunity to analyse and visualise the villa space as was originally intended, and, considered together, they 'manifest a unified vision of planning and design, and suggest an absorbing experience for inhabitants and visitors'.[31] In this context, then, it is unsurprising that the Oplontis site has been a focus of a major excavation and research project since 2005. Building on the excavations of the 1960s and 1970, 'The Oplontis Project' has sought to conduct a systematic, multidisciplinary study of the villa, and to publish a definitive study of *all* aspects of the site.[32]

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[27] On Mau's classification of Roman wall-painting in to four distinct styles, and scholarly response and critique of this approach, cf. n. 84, chapter 4.
[28] The Fourth Style decoration appears to be split between two phases either side of the AD62 earthquake – see de Caro (1987), 85-6; and Thomas and Clarke (2009).
[29] Gee (2017): 86. The combination rooms include room 5 (Second and Fourth Style); 8 (Third and Fourth); 11 (Second and Third); 14 (Second and Third); and 22 (Second, Third, and Fourth). For discussion, see Ehrhardt (2012), 85-7, 97-8, 154-6, 195-7, 209-11, 216, and 220; and Gee (2015a), 89-95; *ead.* (2015b), 127-48; *ead.* (forthcoming).
[30] Bergmann (2002): 95.
[31] Bergmann (2002): 92. Cf. *ead.* (2017), 96 – 'Although the painters of Villa A may have employed common schemes and motifs, the colour combinations, the unusually detailed rendering of pictorial elements, and above all, the location of the frescoes within such an extensive, landscaped site distinguish these from the rest'.
[32] This includes the second 'villa', the so-called Oplontis B site. So far, the international research team has published one comprehensive volume detailing the ancient setting and discover of the site, with a second volume on 'decorative ensembles' forthcoming; see Clarke and Munstasser (2014), and *ead.*

However, despite the vast range and variety of scholarship on individual components of the complex – such as sculpture, mosaics, paintings, architecture, gardens, etc. – there have been relatively few examples where scholars have taken a fully multimedia approach to Villa A. Bergmann's article, 'Art and Nature in the Villa at Oplontis', later developed and enhanced as part of the Oplontis Project, is one such example.[33] Here, the author discusses the conceptual pairing of *ars* and *natura* amongst Latin writers, especially Varro, and then takes us on a hypothetical visit to some key spots within the Oplontis estate to demonstrate how 'certain mechanisms were used at the villa to integrate art and nature in ingenious ways'.[34] In particular, she highlights how garden spaces demonstrate many of the key strategies employed across the complex as a whole in order to achieve a 'unified vision of planning and design', namely the correlation of different media, the framed visual axis, and the integration of interior and exterior space; and she considers how these strategies created a new ideology of the land in which flora and fauna offered a 'new kind of pleasure to be enjoyed by the eye as much as by the palate'.[35]

Zarmakoupi's book on Roman luxury villas, similarly, considers Villa A in the context of a 'new ideology', but her approach focuses on how the architectural vocabulary and style of peristyle-type structures represent an articulation or embodiment of the life of educated leisure that became so synonymous with elite Roman villa culture. As noted in chapter one, for Zarmakoupi, the peristyle garden represented a space where 'the unruly nature of the corrupting Eastern influence' could be tamed:[36] by 'subordinating' the potentially excessive connotations of the Hellenistic *paradeisos* to the disciplined colonnaded structure architectural form associated with the Greek *gymnasium*, the Roman peristyle structure became an architectural framework for villa garden space that mediated between discipline and excess in order to create a space of 'acceptable' aesthetic pleasure. This focus on mediation was also reflected in the peristyle's typical role as a transitional zone within the villa between 'closed' (interior) and 'open' (exterior) space.[37] Using five villas from across the Bay of Naples as case studies (Villa A being one), Zarmakoupi also considers the ways in which contemporary ideas about the landscape were integrated into the architectural design of the Roman villa. In particular, she examines how porticoed gardens were a prime example of

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(forthcoming). The project's research has also been the focus of a major exhibition, 'Leisure and Luxury in the Age of Nero: The Villa's at Oplontis near Pompeii', with an accompanying volume edited by Gazda and Clarke (2017). For the proposed publication schedule of The Oplontis Project, as of 2015, see Gazda and Clarke (2017), 255.

[33] Bergmann (2002); developed in Bergmann (2017). Cf. Bergmann (1991) and (1992) on the ways in which Campanian villa architecture frames, and is framed by, the surrounding landscape.

[34] Bergmann (2002): 88.

[35] Bergmann (2002): 90.

[36] Zarmakoupi (2014): 114; cf. n. 101 and 102, chpt. 1.

[37] Leach (2004), 34; cf. n. 104, chpt. 1.

the way in which Romans developed a new design language between architecture and landscape;[38] and her analysis of Oplontis focuses on three groups of landscape paintings and how these decorative schemes inform our understanding of the connection between architecture and landscape in Roman thought.

Picking up, then, on notions of mediation, the play between interior and exterior space, the importance of the framed view, and the connection between the villa and its surrounding landscape, as highlighted by both Bergmann and Zarmakoupi, I seek to continue to explore the multi-media environment of Villa A through a critical analysis of specific garden spaces and, perhaps more importantly, garden *views*. My analysis will move between two ways a visitor can encounter garden space as part of the complex – seeing an actual garden from the vistas embedded in the villa, and seeing the associated gardens painted on walls – and I will examine how the layering of boundary elements within the villa creates various framing effects which, in turn, affect our perception of the space. Using garden 20, the connected east-wing room series centred around room 69, and the exterior dado paintings of room 78, I will consider how visitors are faced with multiple possible interpretations of the garden boundary within both a single complex and, sometimes, even within a single space; and I will demonstrate how the construction and orientation of garden spaces and paintings within the villa are purposefully designed to multiply our perspectives and defuse oppositional categories.

In this way, this chapter will complement the previous multimedia approaches to the villa by analysing the real and fictive green space at the site in conjunction with one another. However, I will also expand these approaches by integrating a literary counterpoint – the villa letters of Pliny the Younger – into my analysis. My approach will thus not only demonstrate the multimedia effects on offer at Oplontis, but also consider the implications of analysing these effects *cross-media* with a complimentary literary source on elite villa gardens; and it is to this literary source that I now turn.

Pliny the Younger, *Ep.* 2.17 and 5.6

Although Pliny's most valuable house may well have been the one he owned on the Esquiline in Rome, it is two of his country residences that he chooses to describe in the most detail.[39] *Ep.* 2.17 was published around AD104-5, and focuses on his *villa maritima* on the

[38] Zarmakoupi (2014), esp. 122-139.
[39] For the property on the Esquiline, see Plin. *Ep.* 3.21.5. Pliny owned major estates in at least three locations in Italy – see *Ep.* 4.1; c.f. Duncan-Jones (1974), 19-23.

coast of Laurentum (on the beach to the south of Ostia), a winter retreat just seventeen miles from Rome. *Ep.* 5.6, meanwhile, published a few years later, and the longest letter in the collection, focuses on his summer villa in Tuscany, located at the foot of the Apennines near the town of Tifernum Tiberium (modern day Città di Castello). Scholars have debated at length the veracity of these two villa descriptions, with archaeologists attempting to 'locate' Pliny's villas amongst the ancient remains along the Bay of Naples:[40] for the Laurentum villa, two sites are in contention for the location, Grotte di Piastra and Castel Fusano; and, in the ruins of a villa found ten kilometres north of Tifernum, excavators have found what are possibly Pliny's initials (CPCS) stamped on a terracotta drainpipe and roof tiles, interpreted as 'proof' of the existence of the Tuscan villa.[41] However, despite an initial push to locate the villas in reality, it does appear that the debate has shifted away from simply trying to answer whether or not Pliny's country estates actually existed.[42]

Both letters share a similar grand structure:[43] an opening friendly response to an earlier query or remark (2.17.1-2/ 5.6.1-3); a description of the surrounding locality (2.17.2-3/ 5.6.4-13); a central section focusing on the villas' interior and grounds (2.17.4-24; 5.6.14-31); and, finally, a return to the surrounding locale and its amenities (2.17.25-9/ 5.6.32-40). In the central section of 2.17, Pliny focuses on the principal apartments and courts of a main block, followed by a description of the grounds and the *cryptoporticus*, and then a detached pavilion that lies at the far end of the grounds; and, in the central section of 5.6, the description of the main building is sandwiched between two accounts of different gardens and their related buildings. Most significantly for the purpose of my study, descriptions of the wider landscape setting of the villas and their individual garden spaces feature 'prominently, if not predominantly' in both letters: ten out of twenty-seven paragraphs in 2.17 describe the Laurentum villa's locality and grounds, and, in 5.6, twenty-one out of thirty-seven.[44]

Both villa descriptions fall under the category of ekphrasis, a descriptive speech that aims for a 'verbal representation of a visual representation'.[45] Although this term is generally used now to refer almost exclusively to a literary description of a work of art, the ancient

[40] For a summary of the archaeological investigations, see Gibson and Morello (2012), 228-33.
[41] See Champlin (2001).
[42] Drummer (1993) seems to mark a shift in focus away from the villas' archaeological realism. Here, the author argues that, while they may appear to be based on observation, the letters actually follow the same principles of compression, antithesis, and recurring rhythmical schemes as an *argumentio*; and, questioning them as true descriptions at all, he criticises the search for a 'monument' lying behind the letters.
[43] On the basic similarities between the two letters, see Gibson and Morello (2012), 213.
[44] Myers (2005): 104, 115; repeated in *ead.* (2018): 273.
[45] Heffernan (1993): 3. Cf. Krieger (1992), 9, who calls ekphrasis a 'sort-for equivalent of words of a visual image'. Etymologically, the word refers to an act of 'speaking out' (*ek-phrazein*).

concept of ekphrasis encompassed descriptions of all types and in several different formats.[46] Our essential 'definition' of ancient ekphrasis comes from the *Progymnasmata*, a series of rhetorical prescriptions aimed at training budding orators.[47] Here, Theon, 'Hermogenes', Aphthonius, and Nikolaus each set out the features they view as being integral to the concept.[48] According to their definitions, ekphrasis is a 'special form of descriptive speech' (λόγος περιηγηματικὸς) that 'transforms the subject described from something figuratively "shown" (τὸ δηλούμενον) into a sort of literal apparition "before the eyes" (ὑπ' ὄψιν).[49] For the ancients, it appears that they were 'less interested in the subjects of ekphrasis than in its effects on the audience':[50] what was important was the ability of the speaker (or, in our case, writer) to create an image in the mind's eye of the listener (or reader), making them 'see' whatever it was being described.

This process of *enargeia* should, according to Nikolaus, 'bring the subjects of the speech before our eyes and almost make speakers into spectators';[51] and this, in turn, should allow the listener/reader to arrive at the same 'inner vision', or *phantasia*, that was originally experienced by the speaker/writer.[52] *Phantasia*, however, is not merely an imitation of what

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[46] On the 'invention' of the modern understanding, see Webb (2009), 7-9; and Becker (1995), who provides a useful bibliography on ancient and modern usages. Friedländer (1912), who is generally credited as having completed the first and most thorough survey of ekphrasis in ancient and Byzantine literature, does not use the term in a modern sense. Note that Elsner (2002), warns us against too strict a delineation between ancient and modern understanding: 'Despite the correct insistence on the breadth of the term's ancient meanings, there is little doubt that Graeco-Roman writers and readers would have recognized the description of art as a paradigmatic example of ekphrasis with a significance relatively close to modern usage'.
It is almost impossible to capture the breadth and impact of scholarship on ekphrasis. However, important contributions include, but are not limited to, Heffernan (1991); *id.* (1993); Mitchell (1994); Spitzer (1955); Wagner (1996); Webb (1999); *ead.* (2009). On ekphrasis specifically in Greek and Roman texts, see, for example, Elsner (2002); Squire (2009); *id.* (2011), esp. 303-36; *id.* (2013b); and Zeitlin (2013).

[47] The precise age of and relationship between each of each of the treatises is debated, with scholars dating them anywhere between the first and the fifth centuries AD; see Heath (2002-3).

[48] The relevant sections of the *Progymnasmata* can be found in Patillon and Bolognesi (1997), 66-9; Rabe (1913), 22-3; Rabe (1926), 36-41; and Felten (1913), 67-71. For translations of these passages, see Webb (2009), 197-211.

[49] Squire (2015); cf. *id.* (2011), 327-8. The four authors describe ekphrasis in remarkably similar terms: Theon, *Prog.* 118.7, calls it 'a descriptive speech which vividly brings the subject before the eyes' (ἔκφρασίς ἐστι λόγος περιηγηματικὸς ἐναργῶς ὑπ' ὄψιν ἄγων τὸ δηλούμενον); and these words are quoted verbatim by Hermogenes and Aphthonius, and then closely echoed by Nikolaus. In fact, Herm. *Prog.* 10.47 adds the phrase 'as they say' (ὡς φασίν), as if acknowledging a formulaic definition.

[50] Squire (2015).

[51] Nik. *Prog.* [Felton 1913: 70]: ὑπ' ὄψιν ἡμῖν ἄγοντα ταῦτα, περὶ ὧν εἰσιν οἱ λόγοι, καὶ μόνον οὐ θεατὰς εἶναι παρασκευάζοντα.
All four authors of the *Progymnasmata* use the adverb *enargôs* (translated as 'with visual vividness' to describe the process of 'bringing before the eyes'. Hermog. *Prog.* 10.48 argues that *enargeia* should also be coupled with *saphêneia* ('clarity').

[52] Note that Nikolaus uses the qualification 'almost' (μόνον οὐ) in his description of the effect of ekphrasis. Cf. Goldhill (2007), 3, who notes that this qualification is important because 'rhetorical theory knows well that descriptive power is a technique of illusion, semblance, of making to appear.

can be seen, but it also encompasses the vision of what *cannot* be seen with the eyes. The description of a work of art, for example, should not only express the totality of that object, but also convey the original vision, the original *phantasia*, that gave rise to it in the first instance.[53] Thus, as Newlands has argued, ekphrasis is not simply an objective conveyance of a visual reality but, rather, a verbal interpretative strategy for the ideas and feelings expressed through the object being described to us – ekphrasis tells us not so much about appearance, but the way in which objects were *perceived*, and, in this way, it has a sophisticated function as an 'interpreter of attitudes'.[54]

It is in this context, then, that we should understand Pliny's descriptions of his two villas. Although he does not use the term ekphrasis specifically, his confession at 5.6.41 that he wants to set 'the entire villa before [our] eyes' (*totam villam oculis tuis subicere*) clearly 'recalls the technical language of the *Progymnasmata*', as well as that used by Latin authors like Cicero and Quintilian.[55] Furthermore, in both instances, Pliny explicitly frames the villa letters with evocations of the ekphrastic form: at 2.17.1, he uses the term *miraris* ('wonder') in order to signal that an ekphrasis is about to begin;[56] and, when defending the length of his description at the end of 5.6, he draws upon the sizes of the shield accounts in Homer and Virgil to illustrate the power of his own verbal description.[57]

On the Stoic concept of *phantasia*, and its link to ekphrasis, see, for example, Elsner (1995a), 26-7; Webb (2009), 87-130; Männlein-Robert (2013).

[53] See Elsner (1995a), 26, on *phantasia* as 'the vision which gave rise to ekphrasis as well as being the vision which ekphrasis communicated to those who listened. Cf. Philostratus, *Life of Apollonius of Tyana* VI. 19, who wrote that *phantasia* is 'wiser than *mimesis*. For imitation will represent that which can be seen with the eyes while *phantasia* will represent that which cannot, for the latter proceeds with reality as its basis' – on this passage, see Bermelin (1933); Elsner (1995), 26; Schweitzer (1934); and Pollitt (1974), 52-4, 201-5.

[54] Newlands (2002): 42-3.

[55] Squire (2011): 354. See also, Cic. *Or.* 139, on the speaker who 'will put the matter before the eyes through speech' (*rem dicendo subiciet oculis*); and Quint. *Inst.* 9.2.40, on the art of 'placing before the eyes' (*illa…sub oculus subiecto*); cf. Quint. *Inst.* 6.2.29-30, who states that *phantasia* is the means through which images of things that are absent are represented to the mind (*per quas imagines rerum absentium ita repraesentatur animo*), so that we seem to view them with our eyes and have them present before us. On Pliny's debt to these rhetorical practice, see Chinn (2007), esp. 272-5. In this article, the author pushes the standard acceptance of a relationship between the letters and the ancient notion of ekphrasis, reading Pliny's descriptions as a *theory of* ekphrasis itself; and he concludes that we should not simply place the letters within the context of ancient discussions of ekphrasis, but also emphasize their importance to our very understanding of those discussions.

[56] 'Wonder' introduces and/or frames the ekphrases on the shields of Achilles (Hom. *Il.* 18.467), Heracles (Hes. *Shield* 150, 224, 318), and Aeneas (Virg. *A.* 8.619, 8.730); as well as those detailing Europa's basket (Mochus 2.38), the Ariadne tapestry (Cat. 64.51), and the Temple of Carthage (Virg. *A.* 1.456, 1.494). Cf. Becker (1995), 35, who notes that, through wonder, ekphrasis 'encourages both the acceptance of the illusion that we are viewers and awareness of the describer who creates the illusion'.

[57] Whitton (2013), 223, notes that, given Pliny's explicit comparison of the villa letters to the accounts of the shields, the use of *miraris* at 2.17.1 is surely loaded, and thus joins 5.6.43 in an 'epic ekphrastic frame'. Cf. Squire (2011), 353-5, on the importance of scope and scale in Pliny's ekphrastic construction: 'For Pliny, citing the example of Achilles' armour explicitly, the visuality of the text goes

Pliny's desire, though, to bring the villas 'before our eyes' should not be understood simply as an attempt to create verbal 'floor plans'. Indeed, as we shall see, neither of his villa descriptions provides us with enough information to create accurate reconstructions of the sites;[58] and to focus on floor plans is to misinterpret the nuances of Pliny's ekphrases, since, as demonstrated above, this format is not simply about appearance, but, more importantly, the *perception of* that appearance.[59] Therefore, rather than concentrating on the 'realism' of the their architectural details, we should instead understand the villas' properties as part of an ideological or symbolic code.[60] As Chinn has noted, if we cannot fully conceptualise the physical details of the villas, then the descriptions must have some other purpose.

What might this purpose be, then? What does the villa represent and what is the 'inner vision' that Pliny is trying to evoke? Scholarship on the villa descriptions is plentiful and varied, but the various approaches do tend to fall into one of four broad categories (although each of these categories does contain many overlaps). First, both letters have been read as a kind of self-fashioning political metaphor delineating a Roman aristocratic villa lifestyle, within which Pliny presents his daily life of *otium* and the spaces that facilitate it.[61] Such an approach focuses on the way in which Pliny's words 'register not only the values associated with villa life, but also the experiences and gratifications generated by the villas'.[62] Closely related to this approach is the second category of scholarship, which focuses on the ways in which Pliny's letters act as a response to his own 'anxiety' concerning his own wealth within the 'Roman rhetorical abhorrence for ostentation.'[63] As such, the villas (and letters) become powerful symbols of an 'acceptable' form of 'learned leisure' that is 'distanced from

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hand in hand with its scale: size matters within ecphrasis, in short, precisely because visual impressions are proportional to scale'.

[58] This has not, of course, stopped people from trying: for example, Tanzer (1924); Van Buren (1948); and Pember's 3D model in Spencer (2010), 11, fig.8. The tradition of reconstruction is summarized in Du Prey (1994). In defence of the letters' veracity, both Sherwin-White (1966) and Förtsch (1993) argue that Pliny is too specific about his personal experience of the villas to have simply fabricated their layout.

[59] Cf. Spencer (2010), 127-8, who argues that Pliny promotes a direct correlation between acts of viewing, reading, and perceiving the villa phenomenologically; and she notes that Soja's (1996) approach to space as a product of perception (vision and understanding), presentation (design and description), and practice (how it is used and experienced) is helpful in understanding Pliny's approach – a theory tested by Von Stackelberg (2009), 126, who calls the letters a 'play between real and fictive space'.

[60] Myers (2005): 11. Cf. Bergmann (1995), 420. More generally, Edwards (1993) notes that 'Roman descriptions of buildings (much to the frustration of modern scholars) generally work not so much to give a picture of a building's physical appearance, as to evoke certain emotional responses'.

[61] See Leach (1990), with the response of Riggsby (1997). Henderson (2002b), 12-13, and *id.* (2003), 120-4, argues that the villas, and the letters that describe them, are enactments of self-modelling on Pliny's part. On the daily life of *otium* in the villas, see, for example, Laidlaw (1968), 42-52; and Leach (2003), 147-65.

[62] Young (2015): 111.

[63] Chinn (2007): 266.

suggestions of political disapproval or resistance.'[64] For Pliny, the production of literature is of central importance to this intellectually driven *otium*, since literary creation 'balances and justifies the luxurious life of *otium* in the countryside and gives structure to the day';[65] and this sort of activity, in turn, is evoked specifically through the use of ekphrasis, which suggests that the letters can also be read as 'self-reflective models of the text itself as a work of art'.[66] Pliny's focus on literature as an intellectual pursuit also contributes to the third category of scholarship, which looks at the ways in which the letters reflect contemporary rhetorical practices and theories, and suggests that the letters may constitute rhetorical *laudes locorum* or *descriptiones regionum*.[67]

Finally, and of most importance to my own approach, the letters have become a key example within broader discussions on the Roman understanding of luxury, ornamental villa gardens, and the importance of the surrounding landscape to the overall villa experience. Indeed, an analysis of the gardens and landscapes described within the two villa letters reveals these spaces to be of central concern to many of the scholarly debates already noted, since Pliny clearly uses them as a means of articulating and promoting specific aspects of his own self-representation. In general terms, the very choice to feature these spaces so prominently allows Pliny to make such detailed descriptions without the fear of moral opprobrium often attached to descriptions of luxury buildings and architectural details.[68] More specifically, Pliny also goes out of his way to showcase his green spaces as a fitting setting for his intellectual pursuits by consistently emphasising their 'superior' qualities through the use of

[64] Myers (2005): 104. Cf. Hales (2003), 20-3, on the connection between villas and ostentatious lifestyles.
[65] Zarmakoupi (2014): 18. Cf. Hoffer (1999), 29-44, who terms the villas 'factories of letters'. Myers (2005) terms this literary-focused *otium* '*docta otia*' ('learned leisure').
[66] Myers (2005): 123.
[67] For such a reading, see Gamberini (1983), 141-3. Here, the author's argument is based on Quint. *Inst.* 4.3.12 and 2.2.18-20, where the rhetorician recommends a mnemonic exercise where a public speaker learns to order his material and fix it in his memory by creating a tour through a grand house. For a similar approach, see Goalen (2001), 45; and, more generally, Baroin (1998), and Bergmann (1994). Following this emphasis on rhetorical theory, Chinn (2007) deals specifically with *Ep*. 5.6 in relation to the practice and theory of ekphrasis.
[68] Purcell (1996), 135. Cf. Myers (2005), 117. It is also noteworthy that, amongst all of the ornamental gardens of the villas, Pliny still includes a *hortus* at 2.17.5, seemingly located near the front of his Laurentum estate; and scholars have read this inclusion as a further attempt to counteract any negative moral invective on *luxuria*. Whitton (2013), 241, notes that the prominent position of the *hortus* physically in the estate is mirrored by the central placement of the word *hortus* at 2.17.5 (it is the 537th word out of a 1082-word letter). The phrasing Pliny uses (*hortus alius pinguis et rusticus*) appears only once elsewhere, at Virg. *G.* 4.118 (*pinguis hortus*), therefore clearly aligning this particular garden space on the estate with traditional and productive values. A number of excavated villas have revealed the same concern with displaying productivity – see Purcell (1995); and Jashemski (1987). On villas, productivity, and *luxuria*, see also Var. *R.* 2.2.6-18.

elitist terminology, both obscure and unique (e.g. *cryptoporticus, gestatio, areola*), and also Greek (e.g. *xystus, zothecula*).[69]

My own analysis of Pliny will continue to follow this tradition of understanding gardens and landscapes as powerful vehicles of meaning. However, rather than focus on what the gardens and landscapes tell us about Pliny, I seek to examine what Pliny tells us about these spaces and how they are conceptualised. If 2.17 and 5.6, as ekphrastic accounts, are representative of how the author perceives garden space, what do they reveal more broadly about the perception of gardens within the villa lifestyle? How are these types of spaces integrated into the villa, both physically and figuratively? How are they used? And what do Pliny's descriptions tell us about the relationship between garden space and not-garden space in this specific context?

By exploring these types of questions, my analysis will focus on the ways in which Pliny 'frames' his discussion of villa gardens and the surrounding landscape of each site. I will demonstrate how this has the potential to inform us on the importance of the physical framing of views in the construction of garden space. Such an exploration will help to establish a cultural perspective on the thematics of viewing that, in turn, can be used as a platform to analyse and appreciate the garden spaces we encounter in the real site of Oplontis. In particular, I will focus on the ways in which Pliny uses specific language to program our 'viewing' of green space by establishing key interpretative principles, namely the importance of the framed view and the potential of nature to become 'artificial'; and I will demonstrate how, despite a clear interest in 'framing' *natura* in relation to *ars*, Pliny also paradoxically makes it increasingly difficult for us to recognize these frames of reference because he consistently blurs the distinction between a series of categoric opposites.

Approaching the Villa: Pliny, the Framed View, and 'Artificial' Nature

What do Pliny's letters, then, inform us about how he perceives (and how he wants his readers to perceive) the 'natural' world around him? And what does that tell us about how we should approach and interpret the garden spaces he describes to us within the villa proper?

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[69] Note that Var. *R.* intr.2, complains about the proliferation of 'Greekisms' in relation to villas (*nec se putant se habere villam; si non multis vocabulais retinniant Graecis*/ they do not have a villa unless it rings with Greek names). Elsewhere, Pliny demonstrates that he can write lengthy descriptions without using Greek terms (e.g. *Ep.* 1.14, on marriage), but it appears unavoidable in the villa letters. On the application of Pliny's terminology to archaeological finds, see Leach (1997), who has demonstrated that conventional room names used by modern scholars do not necessarily correspond to the ancient usage. Cf. Allison (1993), and *ead.* (2001), who also argues that the application of terms found in literature to an archaeological context can be problematic, even when the original philology is not.

Two descriptions of triple vistas in the Laurentum villa provide us with a good introduction to these issues. First, at 2.17.5, Pliny describes the view of the sea out of a set of windows in a dining room, the partitions of which create the illusion that you are looking out on to three, distinct, seas:[70]

> *Undique valvas aut fenestras non minores valvis habet atque ita a lateribus a fronte* ***quasi tria maria prospectat.***
>
> It has folding doors all round, or windows as large as doors, so that at the front and sides **it seems to look out onto three seas**.

Similarly, at 2.17.21, he also describes a suite of rooms which features windows on three outer walls, this time featuring three different potential 'scenes':

> *Lectum et duas cathedras capit****; a pedibus mare, a tergo villa, a capite silvae****: tot facies locorum totidem fenestris et distinguit et miscet.*
>
> It is large enough to hold a couch and two chairs, and has **the sea at its foot, the neighbouring villas behind, and the woods at your head**, views that can be seen separately from its many windows or blended into one.

In both instances, Pliny demonstrates his desire to define the villa in terms of its views, which not only reflects the 'ekphrastic drive' powering the letters, but also demonstrates a conscious desire to partition the natural world into a series of framed vistas;[71] and he thus appears to celebrate a 'domestic context in which architecture imposes order on the land and nature is shaped into a series of perfect views'.[72] In fact, elsewhere, Pliny even goes as far as to suggest that another dining room within the Laurentum villa actually 'owns' (*possidet,* 2.17.5) the view of the sea and the shoreline outside.[73] Furthermore, both of these triple vistas emphasise not just the importance of the simple act of viewing, but also the importance of providing a *multiplicity of* views to the occupant of these rooms – at 2.17.21, in particular, it is the variety

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[70] The translations of the two villa letters in this chapter are from Radice (1969), with minor adaptations.
[71] Whitton (2013): 230.
[72] Bergmann (1991): 66. Although the author here is discussing Statius, her point is also relevant to Pliny's descriptions. Cf. Myers (2005), 115, who argues that 'one of the most characteristic features of Pliny's villa descriptions is his emphasis on landscape views framed by the architectural features in the house'. Drerup (1959) was the first to theorize on the importance of the 'framed view' in Roman domestic architecture. The proprietary of the view is demonstrated by the fact that neighbours went to court over their *prospectus* – see Bergmann (1991), 63, n.37. The desire for a framed view was not universal: Seneca, for example, condemns the fashion by recalling the contrast between Scipio Africanus' villa, with its small slit windows, and the large picture windows of more modern villas (*Ep.* 86.8-11).
[73] 2.17.2: *praeterea cenatio quae latissimum mare longissiumum litus villas amoenissimas possidet*. Radice (1969) translates *possidet* as 'commands a view of'. Cf. Whitton (2013), 238, on the legal term *servitutes* ('easements'), which included the right of a house not to have its views blocked.

of the countryside/villa/sea view (emphasized by the tricolon *a pedibus mare, a tergo villa, a capite silvae*) that appears to delight Pliny the most.

Similar effects and 'visual programming' are at work in the opening sections of 5.6, where, once again, Pliny's descriptions of the surrounding locale of the villa encourage us to think about issues of spectatorship and the 'artfulness' of the landscape. At 5.6.7, for example, Pliny comments on the exceptional beauty of the surrounding landscape:

> *Regionis forma pulcherrima.* ***Imaginare amphitheatrum*** *aliquod immensum, et quale sola rerum natura possit effingere.*
>
> The region is exceptionally beautiful. **Picture for yourself a vast amphitheatre** such as could only be the work of nature.

In this example, although he claims only nature could achieve something so beautiful, Pliny invites us to recognise this beauty in comparison to a man-made structure specifically designed for spectatorship.[74] Here, then, as Spencer argues, Pliny programs us to recognise nature's beauty via comparison with an artificial structure – the form of the villa's location is beautiful, but this beauty has to be 'qualified by a defined visual frame of reference and described using an architectural overlap'.[75]

At 5.6.13, Pliny takes the artificiality of the landscape even further by directly comparing the landscape surrounding the villa to a picture:

> *Magnam capies voluptatem, si hunc regionis situm ex monte prospexeris. Neque enim terras tibi sed* ***formam*** *aliquam ad eximiam pulchritudinem* ***pictam*** *videberis cernere: ea varietate, ea descriptione, quocumque inciderint oculi, reficientur.*
>
> It is a great pleasure to look down on the region from the mountaintop. For you would think you were looking at a **picture** of unusual beauty rather than a real landscape, and the harmony to be found in this variety refreshes the eye wherever it turns.

Pliny's choice of language and metaphor in this passage is striking for a number of reasons. First, as in the description of the triple vista at 2.17.21, Pliny finds delight not just in the view of the landscape, but in its variety (*varietate*). However, in conjunction with this actual view,

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[74] This is not, necessarily, an odd comparison. Like the villa, the amphitheatre is an artificial structure that can incorporate facets of nature – see Carter (2015).
[75] Spencer (2010): 128. Cf. Stat. *Silv.* 2.2.15-19, where he recognizes the beauty of the natural landscape *and* its beauty *after* being shaped by *'ars'*.

it is also the description (*descriptione*) that refreshes the eyes – within the letter a viewer's eyes are depicted as both looking around the scenery, and also as being 'somehow affected by the textual description of this very scenery' – and by merging visual and descriptive acts here, Pliny creates a 'single perceptual experience'.[76] This mixing up of visual and textual forms, so central to the ekphrastic form, coupled with the use of *cernere* ('to distinguish through the sense of sight, perceive, discern) to describe the resultant perceptual experience, thus alerts us to the fact that Pliny's *phantasia* encompasses not only looking or seeing, but also 'understanding and making a judgement through the faculty of sight'.[77] Pliny does not want us to simply 'look' at the landscape in this passage, but, instead, he actively encourages us to view it in artificial terms, so artificial that it actually takes on the form of a picture (*formam…pictam*). Looking back at the triple vistas of 2.17, then, we might understand the framing of these views by windows as akin to a framed piece of art; or, at the very least, we are certainly reminded of man's ability to create aesthetic pleasure by turning nature into art through the creation and placement of clear and structured borders.[78]

Thus, in both 2.17 and 5.6, the descriptions of the surrounding landscape inform us of two overarching principles that guide Pliny's approach to landscape – the importance of the framed view, and the consequent potential of nature to become 'artificial'.[79] It is with these two principles in mind that I would like to turn to our first 'real' example of a villa garden in this chapter, garden room 20 in Villa A, and consider how framing features impact the 'visibility' of this garden space. Is Pliny's perception of nature as a series of artificially constructed views reflected in reality, as Newlands' definition of ekphrasis as an 'interpreter of values' suggests? And, if his description of landscape gives us an insight into *how* to view garden spaces, can Oplontis similarly point to how these cultural perceptions work in action?

Visual Openness vs. Spatial Segregation

Entering the Oplontis complex through the *atrium,* the visitor's gaze would undoubtedly be drawn to the penetrating visual axis running north from the *atrium* (5), through room 4, through an enclosed garden (20), and a large room (21), eventually opening up onto a sprawling rear garden [see Fig. 4.4].[80] The visitor's eye is clearly directed here

[76] Chinn (2007): 271.
[77] Young (2015): 119. Note that *cernere* also introduces Statius' ekphrastic villa description in *Silv.* 2.2.
[78] Cf. Stat. *Silv.* 2.2.72-5. On this passage, see Newlands (2002), 172-5.
[79] Cf. Elsner (1995a), 81, who argues that, for Pliny, the articulation of his Tuscan villa in 5.6, the reason for his pride in it, and the most effective method of communicating what he sees as its best qualities are 'all defined by the view'.
[80] This room series is a variation of the *fauces-atrium-tablinum* axis deemed typical of many Roman houses and villas from the first century BC. Proponents of this so-called 'empty house' model have

through the use of framing features. First, columns frame the view from the *atrium* into garden 20 [see Fig. 4.5]; from here the view is focused even further, directed through a single window in the north wall of the garden; and this window directs you into room 21, where further columns on the north side both frame and also allow an opening-up of the view onto the rear garden [see Fig. 4.6].[81] In addition to framing views of the outside rear garden, the painted walls of garden room 20 also mimic the effect of the window in the north wall: the murals on the east and west walls are separated into a tripartite formation by engaged columns, with each of the three panels representing a 'garden' scene with a fountain as its central feature;[82] and the contrast between the highly stylised deep red backgrounds of the outer panels and the more 'realistic' blue/green background of the central panel creates the impression that, once again, we are 'looking out' through a window onto a real garden scene in the distance [see Fig. 4.7].[83]

This room series, then, clearly parallels Pliny's predilection for framed views of the 'natural' world. What we see here, in particular, is a garden space (20) being used as a visual marker with cleverly focused surrounding frames that invite the visitor to the villa directly into the rear garden from the *atrium* in one continuous movement. However, once the visitor begins their physical journey towards that end goal, it becomes clear that the sequence of openings allowing them to see through the building were designed for viewing and viewing alone. Despite appearing very open from the entrance point of view, garden 20 is in fact almost completely enclosed: both the east and west walls have no openings at all, only the illusionistic 'windows' detailed above; the north wall features just a single, albeit quite large, window; and the south façade columns are joined together by a low wall. The room was open to the sky, and an opening in the southeast corner allows access to the garden (presumably for maintenance of the original plantings), but, crucially, there is no through route.

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emphasised the importance of the vista from the front door of a house through the *tablinum* and into the garden/peristyle beyond. Wallace-Hadrill (1994), 44, for example, states that the 'seemingly boundless nature of the modern remains has led to the house being construed as visually transparent'; cf. Drerup (1959); Bek (1980), 185-6; Watts (1987), 187-9; Clarke (1991), 4-6. Flower (1996), 199-200, summarises the effect of this model as perceiving the house as a 'series of constructed tableaux or of symmetrically designed planes inviting the admiration of the viewers standing by the doorway'; cf. Elsner (1995a), 76, on the view as the 'crucial determining factor' of the social articulation of the Roman house.

[81] Cf. Whitton (2013), 230, who argues that the accumulation of nouns at 2.17.5 (*a tergo…respicit montes*), where Pliny 'looks back' at the rooms he has 'visited' so far, is designed to mimic such a long axial perspective.

[82] These frescoes are now faded almost entirely beyond recognition, but were fortunately recorded by photos in 1967 – see Clarke (2014), para. 765. Reconstructions by Paulo Baronio can be found in Bergmann (2017), fig. 9.1.

[83] Bergmann (2017), 97, also notes that, although the east and west walls appear to be mirror compositions, they actually feature many small variations (e.g. style of fountains). This, of course, reminds us of Pliny's delight in the variation of views in his triple vistas.

Thus, in order actually to reach the rear garden, the visitor to Villa A is forced to circumvent garden 20 entirely through a series of passageways on either the east (passage 3) or the west (passage 6) side of the enclosure [see Figs. 4.3 and 4.4]. These walkways do not, however, bring the visitor into room 21, but, rather, into porticoes that border the rear garden – from passageway 6, you enter portico 33, and, from passageway 3, you enter portico 34 – and from these porticoes you can either enter the rear garden or enter room 21 through doorways in its east and west walls. On the physical journey, then, the visitor completely loses their original sight line and enters the rear garden from an altered perspective. It appears that the architect has designed the spaces specifically in order to achieve the sort of variety and visual delight that pleased Pliny so much. Here, the visitor is drawn in through the long axial perspective towards an end goal, the careful framing paradoxically suggesting openness and a lack of boundaries. This visual temptation controls movement from the *atrium* to the rear garden, but, ultimately, it also controls vision, since it forces the visitor to question what they think they saw when forced into an altered perspective. Such variation and visual trickery would surely have added to the delight of the visitor navigating their way through the complex for the first time, and these effects could surely have been enhanced even further through the use of 'temporary' partitions (such as curtains) that could have been strategically opened and closed to create multiple and varied viewing experiences each time you entered the villa.[84]

The disparity between the visual connectivity of the garden spaces in this *atrium*-core room series and the accessibility for movement to and through these spaces is repeated in the east-wing of the villa, where we find a fascinating series of interconnected rooms and gardens that rely on a 'clear and intentional connection to *each other* and a complex relationship of views through other spaces' [see fig. 4.7].[85] Here, room 69 acts as a remarkable central axis point surrounded by a variety of different garden spaces and views – the room's 'special status' is marked by its central location, its elevated roof, and its inlaid marble floor, all of which help demarcate it as 'the most important of the entertaining spaces' in this wing of the villa.[86]

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[84] The alignment of the openings in this axial perspective seem too obvious to me to suggest that it was not designed with viewing in mind, but the presence of temporary partitions need not be incompatible with the play between visual openness and physical segregation. Lauritsen (2012) argues that scholars have failed to investigate in detail the impact of 'permeable boundaries' (such as doors, partitions, curtains – all of which are no longer extant) on the 'open' visual axes of the house and villas; and he suggests that these boundaries would have also played a crucial role in regulating visual and physical access to back parts of the house. Cf. Flower (1996), 199-200.

[85] Young (2015): 133.

[86] Bergmann (2017): 108; cf. Thomas (2017a), 81-2, fig. 7.5 (reconstruction of room 69's roof and *fastiguum*), and fig. 7.6 (reconstruction of marble floor).

In this one room, the visitor can turn in every direction and enjoy a far-reaching 'green' vista. The west window, for example, exposes a wall of green trees on the eastern edge of the same rear garden that we encountered in the *atrium*-core series, and this green wall is punctuated by the columns of the portico (56) adjacent to the west. Looking east, our line of sight is also directed through more framing portico columns (60) into another huge garden (96) featuring what appears to be a swimming pool [see Fig. 4.3]. Both of these east and west views remind us of the directed and framed views through the *atrium*-core series into the rear garden. Furthermore, the eastern view in particular seems purposefully designed to include the *varietas* Pliny highlighted as so important. Excavations of the root cavities of the trees planted on the far eastern side of garden 96 suggest that the plantings were carefully chosen to create a natural 'still life', a subtle 'moving picture', wherein the order of the trees was staggered to create an orchestrated gradual blossoming from the centre to the edges over time:[87] in the centre of these plantings stood two lemon trees, which flowered in the spring; then, moving outwards, we find clusters of oleanders, which bloom in June and July; and, finally, the outer positions were occupied by dark and shady plane trees.

In contrast to these views, which focus on a line of sight towards a real garden, the north and south viewing axes from room 69 feature a different and somewhat unique vista – here we find increasingly narrow framing devices focusing our gaze through a combination of real and fictive gardens to a specific end point of another garden painting.[88] The two axes mirror each other in a number of ways. Situated on either side of room 69, we find two courtyard gardens, one to the north (70) and one to the south (68), both fully decorated with garden paintings, and both with large windows in their north and south walls. Looking north from room 69 [see Fig. 4.9], the gaze is directed through garden room 70 by means of the large windows [see Fig. 4.10], through room 74, and finally into a further garden room 87, where we catch a glimpse of another garden painting on the back (north) wall. Similarly, looking south from room 69, we encounter another continuous visual axis, this time from 69, into garden room 68, through room 65, and finally into a small garden room (61), which features a garden painting on the back (south) wall [see Figs. 4.12 and 4.13]. I will be returning to the specifics of the garden painting imagery and their compositional characteristics later, but, for now, I would like to focus on the visual and physical connections between these rooms, and the ways in which they continue the patterns established in the *atrium*-core series.

[87] Bergmann (2017): 100; cf. Jashemski (1993), 298-300, on the root cavity excavations.
[88] Bergmann (2017), 108, notes that the convoluted indoor-outdoor spaces of this series are extremely rare, although they do find parallel at the contemporary Villa San Marco; cf. n.12 above.

Using the same effect as the *atrium*-core series, these continuous visual axes are achieved through the use of window openings: in order to view from 69 to 70 to 87, there is an alignment of the windows of 70 with the opening of the southeast corner of 87; and to view from 69 all the way through to 61, the windows of 68 align with the windows of 61 [see Figs. 4.14, 4.15, and 4.16]. Furthermore, in this east wing series, we are introduced to more novel viewing angles, since none of the windows are in absolutely direct alignment with each other, and the 'whimsical' concave and convex architectural forms of rooms 87 create new variety in the axial perspectives [see Fig. 4.11].

However, just as we saw previously, these continuous visual axes north to south are not mirrored by continuous physical access. All four garden spaces (61, 68, 70, 87) are only fully open to the sky – the only 'entry' points are the windows – and so you cannot follow the north or south sight lines *through* the spaces as described, but, instead, you must move *around* them in adjacent passageways. In fact, the difference between visual and physical access is so extreme here that, if you move northwards – through passageway 72, into room 74 and then 88 and 90, finally turning left into room 89 – you can actually find yourself looking into room 87 southwards from a completely new angle [see Fig 4.17]. Furthermore, the garden rooms here are even more physically enclosed than garden 20 since, unlike the one access doorway for maintenance in that example, these east-wing rooms can seemingly '*only* be enjoyed through picture windows that punctuate the walls'.[89] Paradoxically, then, the axes create the illusion of ever-expanding space into the distance, whilst the physical frames of the rooms become narrower and more focused as we reach the final 'goal' of the back wall paintings in either room 87 or room 61.

So, what can we take away from these two room series? The disparity between the visual connectivity and physical access here creates what Bergmann has termed 'architecture for ventilation, illumination, and viewing' – the visual continuity of the spaces, the alternation between completely roofed rooms and garden rooms open to the sky (and the subsequent creation of light and air wells), creates the impression that the structure can 'breathe', thus breaking down the normal function of architecture as a firmly bounded enclosure. The Oplontis complex's ability to 'breathe' appears to be made possible specifically through the use of garden spaces, since their placement suggests that the garden boundary lends itself perfectly to transforming what could be a harsh and concrete boundary into a more permeable entity.

Reflecting back on the visual programming at work in Pliny's letters, it appears that his desire to mould the natural world into a series of framed views is reflected in the

[89] Young (2015): 133.

architectural forms of Villa A. Seeing how these frames work in action, however, demonstrates to us that such a desire does not necessarily lead to the creation of enclosed, static, or unchanging scenes. In this east-wing room series, the various boundaries to each room operate as 'porous membranes' rather than 'impassable frontiers', transforming the intermediary garden spaces into liminal zones designed not only to be looked *at,* but also to be seen *through*.[90] Furthermore, if we return to one of the triple vistas at 2.17.21, we see that Pliny's description actually alludes to the porous nature of these boundaries:

> *Lectum et duas cathedras capit; a pedibus mare, a tergo villa, a capite silvae: tot facies locurum totidem fenestris et* ***distinguit et miscet.***
>
> It is large enough to hold a couch and two chairs, and has the sea at its foot, the neighbouring villas behind, and the woods at your head, views which **can be seen separately** from its many windows **and blended into one.**

The last three words of this passage are key because, despite his delight in them, Pliny immediately undermines the potential impact of such framed views: the three vistas of sea, villa, and woods can certainly be distinguished (*distinguit*) from each other, but, crucially, they can also be blended (*miscet*) into one another. In this way, these words encapsulate the paradoxes of our two room series – in both cases, physical barriers create division and diversion, but the visual openness (also created by a series of 'barriers', or frames) allows the blending of multiple prospects into a single axial perspective.

Blurred Lines

It is with this 'blending' in mind that I would now like to return to Pliny's descriptions in more detail – this time to a series of green spaces in his Tuscan villa – and consider the ways in which these descriptions reflect the garden's liminal nature in their mediation of categoric opposites. In fact, the blending of the three vistas in 2.17 actually foreshadows many of the themes we see in 5.6, where Pliny consistently blurs the distinction between architectural and horticultural features. Towards the beginning of his description of the villa's interior and layout, for example, he introduces us to a terrace garden, or *xystus*:[91]

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[90] I borrow this phrasing from Platt and Squire (2017), 47, in their discussion of 'what do frames do?'.
[91] 5.6.16-18. Leach (2004), 34, provides a useful summary of the connotations of *xystus*. Originally a Greek term, Cicero (*Acad.* 2.3.9) appears to be the first to use the term in Latin to designate a space within the Roman villa. Vitruvius (*de Arch.* 5.9), when speaking about public *palaestrae*, distinguishes between Greek (covered villa exercise grounds) and Roman (open spaces where trees grow between a double colonnade) form of *xysti*. Pliny adopts the term here as one of several names for garden space.

> *Ante porticum xystus in plurimas species distinctus concisusque buxo; demissus inde pronusque pulvinus, cui bestiarum effigies invicem adversas buxus inscripsit; acanthus in plano, mollis et paene dixerim liquidus. Ambit hunc ambulatio pressis varieque tonsis viridibus inclusa; ab his gestatio in modum circi, quae buxum multiformem humilesque et retentas manu arbusculas circumit. Omnia maceria muniuntur: hanc gradata buxus operit et subtrahit. Pratum inde non minus natura quam superiora illa arte visendum.*
>
> In front of the portico is a terrace laid out with box hedges clipped into different shapes, from which a bank slopes down, also with figures of animals cut out of box facing each other on either side. On the level below there is a bed of acanthus so soft one could say it looks like water. All round is a path hedged by bushes which are trained and cut into different shapes, and then a drive, oval like a race-course, inside which are various box figures and clipped dwarf shrubs. The whole area is enclosed by a dry-stone wall which is hidden from sight by a box hedge planted in tiers. Beyond is a meadow, as well worth seeing for its natural beauty as the features just described for their artificial beauty.

A similar effect can also be seen at 5.6.36, where, at the end of the *stibadium*, columns of Carystian (green) marble topped with ivy surround a dining couch.[92] These green columns, in turn, are perhaps designed to mimic the ivy-draped trees of the hippodrome garden (5.6.32), which act as 'columns' of enclosure around the space:

> *illae hedera vestiuntur utque summae suis ita imae alienis frondibus virent. Hedera truncum et ramos pererrat vicinasque platanos transitu suo copulat. Has buxus interiacet; exteriores buxos circumvenit laurus, umbraeque platanorum suam confert.*
>
> It is encircled by plane trees, green with their own leaves above, and below with ivy that climbs over trunk and branch, and links tree to tree as it spread across them. Box shrubs grow between the plane trees, and outside there is a ring of laurel bushes, which add their shade to that of the planes.

Pliny is not alone in referencing the nurturing of a vine to grow around a tree trunk or a column shaft: Cicero, for example, remarks that an expert gardener had trained ivy to cover

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[92] Plin. *Ep.* 5.6.36: *in capite stibadium candido marmore vite protegitur, vitem quattuor columellae Carystiae subeunt/* At the upper end of the course is a curved dining-seat of white marble, shaded by a vine trained over four pillars of Carystian marble.

architecture and statues; and Columella actually gives practical advice to his readers on the procedure for training vines around trees.[93]

Several expressions of this motif can also be found at Oplontis, where the image of the painted vine winding around columns and tree shafts is repeated across various spaces within the villa. On the engaged columns in the east and west walls of garden room 20, for example, the coloured lower sections are covered in painted vines (although this is difficult to see now due to exposure damage) [see Fig. 4.18];[94] and the marble pillars framing the rear garden were also carved and painted with clinging vines and leaves.[95] Furthermore, this motif found a 'living parallel' in *portico* 40, where Jashemski found flowerpots and roots of climbing ornamentals (clematis, honeysuckle, ivy), presumably trained to scale the nearby columns.[96] Thus, across Oplontis and throughout Pliny's descriptions, we see sustained multimedia expressions and visual cross-referencing of the same motif.

More generally, then, and returning to the description of the hippodrome garden, it appears that, in a similar way to the *xystus*, the structures that help to delineate and define this garden space are created out of several 'green' elements. However, whereas in the *xystus*, when the *maceria* was simply *disguised* by a box hedge, here in the hippodrome garden, the architectural feature is actually *replaced* entirely by natural elements: instead of actual columns, the plane trees act as a border, and are joined together by ivy, 'forming a wall or continuous border and functioning as "dressing" (*vestiuntur*) for them', thus creating a sort of natural or green architecture.[97] The juxtaposition created by this green architecture is also especially stark in this garden space because of the terminology Pliny uses to denote it – *hippodromus*. By creating a space modeled or named after a riding ground, Pliny clearly wants to evoke the grandeur of public architecture, and yet the formality of this architectural style has been created out of plantings, as opposed to actual structures.

In both the *xystus* and the *hippodromus*, then, Pliny has mentioned boundary or bounding elements in relation to the spaces, but, crucially, they are almost always constructed out of materials that can be found as part of the garden or, at the very least, blend into it. Subtle changes in the choice of materials creates a camouflaging effect, whereby the very natural elements that grow in the garden now become the elements that also contain it. By blending the 'architectural' and the 'natural', Pliny elides two opposite descriptors, and thus

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[93] Cic. *Q. Fr.* 3.1.5; Col. 5.6.7; cf. *Anth. Pal.* 9.23, in which a plane tree thanks a vine for covering its dead trunk with leaves.
[94] Compare Fig. 4.17, taken originally after the excavation, with Fig. 4.6, where the motif is barely visible.
[95] See de Caro (1976), figs. 32-9, for photographs of the marble fragments of these columns.
[96] Bergmann (2017): 100; cf. Jashemski (1993), 294-5.
[97] Young (2015): 128.

suggests that, although boundaries are still important in providing structure, there is also a desire to 'soften' the edges of each space – again, then, *distinguit et miscet.*

To complicate these issues, though, the green features of these spaces are anything but 'natural'. Almost every plant and tree detailed in the description is either trimmed into intensely stylized shapes (such as animals), or, at the very least, heavily pruned (for example, into box hedges). Thus, although nature is used to 'soften' traditionally architectural features, this in turn appears to encourage, or perhaps even lead directly to, the increased artificiality of those very natural elements. This is particularly evident in part of the description of the *hippodromus*:[98]

> *Alibi pratulum, alibi ipsa buxus intervenit in formas mille descripta, litteras interdum, quae modo nomen domini dicunt modo artificis: alternis metulae surgunt, alternis inserta sunt poma, et in opere urbanissimo subita velut inlati ruris imitatio.*
>
> Between the grass lawns here and there are box hedges clipped into innumerable shapes, some being letters which spell the gardener's name or his master's; small obelisks of box alternate with fruit trees, and then suddenly in the midst of this ornamental scene is what looks like a piece of rural countryside planted there.

Here, the artifice of the garden is taken to such extremes that some box hedges have actually been trimmed to spell out Pliny's own name, as well as the name of his gardener – quite literally, then, 'signing' the garden and marking it out as an artificial creation. However, just as Pliny affirms these artificial qualities, he then swiftly juxtaposes them with a description of a little 'piece of the countryside' (*ruris imitatio*) in the middle of this 'ornamental scene' (*opere urbanissimo*).[99] This direct contrast of *rus* and *urbs* continues to play with the representation of the natural world and our concepts of what constitutes 'wild' or 'tamed' green space; for, here, rather than being enclosed, as formal definitions of garden space would suggest, the ornamental garden is now the space doing the enclosing, and the very thing 'inside' it is the type of space that you would expect to be shut 'outside' and surrounding it.

We also saw a similar juxtaposition of different categories of nature at the end of the *xystus* description (5.6.16-18, quoted above), when Pliny describes a meadow that stretches out beyond the terraced area. What is especially interesting here is that Pliny simultaneously

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[98] 5.6.35.
[99] Cf. Spencer (2010), 131, whose translation of this section emphasises the 'artfulness' of the garden even more: 'in the midst of this urbane work of art, a mock rural scene unfolds'.

suggests that the meadow is less appealing than the *xystus* garden, but that it is also comparable. He says that the meadow is no less of a must-see (*visendum*) on account of its nature (*natura*) than the artfulness (*arte)* of its artificial terraced space. This suggests to us that Pliny assumes we, as readers, would automatically see the artifice of the *xystus* as superior in some way to the more 'natural' meadow; and yet he also makes both *ars* and *natura* subject to the force of the gerundive *visendum*, therefore also equating the beauty of the meadow with that of highly stylised topiary.[100] This, in turn, reminds us of the visual programming at the beginning of the letter, where Pliny used the amphitheatre and the notion of a picture to quantify the beauty of the surrounding landscape. Once again, any strict delineation between the categories of art and nature continues to be blurred.

One of the main consequences of this continual blurring between architecture and horticulture, and art and nature, is that it becomes increasingly difficult to determine exactly where each garden space begins and ends. This is evident in the vagueness of the distinction between *xystus* and meadow: it is not only unclear where the meadow is – it simply stretches out 'from there' (*inde*), but it is also unclear whether we are meant to view it as part of the garden at all.[101] Pliny sets up a distinction between the two spaces but this distinction is undermined in two ways: firstly, through the shared gerundive in the description; and secondly, in the garden itself, where the box hedge concealing the stone wall tricks the eye into including the meadow within your experience as an extension of the terraced space. This, in turn, may remind us of one of the effects of Livia's Garden Room.[102] Here, the 'wild' and 'tame' elements of nature were separated by the use of barriers (a stone wall and a lattice fence) within the composition; but these barriers were effectively dissolved by the all-surrounding experience of the continuous wrap-around frieze, thus tricking us, as viewers, to include the 'wild' elements in our conception of what constitutes the garden space. In all these instances, then, different categories or types of nature are contrasted but also elided, and this forces us to question what is really 'the garden' and what is not.

The difficulty in determining clear boundaries and edges for garden space continues in Pliny's descriptions of his own 'garden rooms' within his Tuscan villa. At 5.6.20-2, for example, Pliny discusses a suite of rooms that surround a courtyard (*areola*) shaded by four plane trees and centred on a small fountain. In one of these rooms (*cubiculum*), already green

[100] Spencer (2010): 129.
[101] Cf. Riggsby (2003), 169-70, on why the villa letters might be hard to follow: rooms are only generally given an orientation *relative to one another*, and so, instead of direction, Pliny merely notes adjacency – no left, right, forward, etc., but simply adverbs such as *hinc, inde, mox, deinde*, or verbs such as *asneciture, adhaeret, adiacet, adplicitum est*.
[102] Cf. pp. 128-9, chpt 4.

and shady due to the outside trees, is an 'eye-deceiving' wall painting (*aves imitata pictura*) of birds perching along a series of branches:

> *Contra mediam fere porticum diaeta paulum recedit, cingit areolam, quae quattuor platanis inumbratur. Inter has marmoreo labro aqua exundat circumiectasque platanos et subiecta platanis leni aspergine fovet…Est et aliud cubiculum a proxima platano viride et umbrosum, marmore excultum podio tenus, nec cedit gratiae marmoris ramos insidentesque ramis aves imitata pictura.*
>
> Almost opposite the middle of colonnade is a suite of rooms set slightly back and surrounding a small court shaded by four plane trees. In the centre a fountain plays in a marble basin, watering the plane trees round it and the ground beneath them with its light spray…There is also another bedroom, green and shady from the nearest plane tree, which has walls decorated with marble up to the ceiling and an eye-deceiving fresco (no less attractive) of birds perched on the branches of the trees.

As Spencer notes, this room is 'enthusiastically artificial in its transportation of a profusion of nature indoors and onto the walls'.[103] Not only does this transportation dissolve the wall surface itself by connecting viewers to an imaginary landscape that knows no bounds, but it also dissolves the distinction between the 'outside' *areola* and the 'inside' *cubiculum*, since the continuation of branches from the outside plane trees onto the interior painting creates a single seamless motif across the two spaces (similar to the repeated representation of the climbing vine at Oplontis). The effect you perceive here, then, depends entirely on orientation. From a position inside the courtyard, the wall paintings draw the viewer into the *cubiculum* and connect them to an imaginary prospect; whereas, from the *cubiculum* looking out, the plane trees appear to bring the painting to life. The result of this complex interplay of interior and exterior, real and represented, artificial and natural is an 'enhanced living *tableau*', designed to delight its occupants with *varietas* and playfulness.[104]

The effects that Pliny describes here also find a real life counterpart in the room series at Oplontis already discussed (20, 61, 68, 70, and 87).[105] I already noted how the disparity

[103] Spencer (2010): 130.
[104] I borrow this phrasing from Young (2015), 109. Although she uses it to describe the effect of the framed view from room 21 through the window into garden 20 at Oplontis, the same principles clearly apply here.
[105] This type of 'indoor' courtyard garden space seemed unlikely in reality to early commentators of Pliny, but Jashemski's findings (1979), 52-3, confirmed many large root cavities in Pompeian courtyard gardens.

between visual openness and spatial segregation in these room series transformed the intermediary garden spaces into liminal zones with porous membranes; but, in light of Pliny's description, we should also be aware of how this liminality also challenges the very basic distinction between what is supposedly 'inside' and 'outside'. Garden rooms 20, 68, and 70, for example, all designed to be looked at and (more crucially) *through*, clearly play with our conceptions of these categories: we think of gardens as 'outside' — and, indeed, these courtyards are open to the sky — but, at Oplontis, they also function as an integral part of the interior of the house, and are also interiorised by their own structural location within the villa [see Figs. 4.3, 4.4, and 4.8]. This play, then, between interior and exterior space is heightened even further in the east-wing room series because of the interaction between multiple versions of the same effect across the north-south axial perspective.

A final example of these effects can be found at 5.6.37-40, where Pliny describes another *cubiculum*, this time paired with a *zothecula*, that are designed to be a continuation or extension of the *hippodromus* garden:

> *E regione stibadii adversum cubiculum tantum stibadio reddit ornatus, quantum accipit ab illo. Marmore splendet, valvis in viridia prominet et exit, alia viridia superioribus inferioribusque fenestris suspicit despicitque. Mox zothecula refugit quasi in cubiculum idem atque aliud. Lectus hic et undique fenestrae, et tamen lumen obscurum umbra premente. Nam laetissima vitis per omne tectum in culmen nititur et ascendit. Non secus ibi quam in nemore iaceas, imbrem tantum tamquam in nemore non sentias.*
>
> Facing the seat is a bedroom, which contributes as much to the beauty of the scene as it gains from its position. It is built of shining white marble, extended by folding doors, which open straight out into greenery; its upper and lower windows all look out into more greenery above and below. Next, a small alcove, which is part of the room but also separated from it. Here there is a bed, and, although it has windows on all its walls, the light is dimmed by the dense shade of a flourishing vine, which climbs over the whole building up to the roof. There you can lie and imagine you are in a grove, but without the risk of rain.

Initially, in this *cubiculum*, we notice the same sort of intentionally framed view onto a 'natural' or green landscape that we have come to expect within the villa setting – here, the folding door and series of windows all provide a bounded structure through which to focus our gaze onto the greenery outside. However, once again, we also see the same play between oppositional categories, producing a counterpoint to the notion of intentional division evoked

by the very same boundaries, and an elision of indoor and outdoor space. Within the alcove, for example, the vine covers the building so much that you can lie inside and imagine that you are not in a room at all but in a grove (*nemore*); and, from a position outside looking into this alcove, one can imagine that the vine hides the architectural structure of the building entirely, perhaps suggesting a naturally occurring canopy of vine, as opposed to an actual marble room. Furthermore, Pliny's choice of vocabulary for the outside 'greenery' suggests, rather paradoxically, an immersive quality. *Viridia*, linguistically, suggests *viridaria*, a term used to denote small, enclosed gardens that made ornamental greenery the star turn and were often covered in frescoes also decorated with garden images;[106] and, indeed, it is a term that could quite easily be used to describe the interior courtyard gardens (20, 68, 70) that we have seen at Oplontis. By using the evocative term *viridia* to describe an *outside* and, presumably, open space, Pliny quite literally turns our notions of interior and exterior space inside-out.

The two garden room series at 5.6.20-2 and 5.6.37-40 thus demonstrate that, by blurring the distinction between architectural and horticultural elements, Pliny also blurs the distinction between concepts of *ars* and *natura*, and between inside and outside space. Although the inside rooms here are described as distinct and separate spaces, different in some way to the outside greenery, they also simultaneously become part of that outside greenery as an extension. In both instances, we are left questioning where each garden space truly begins and ends – and, despite a consistent emphasis on framing green spaces into constructed views, Pliny also, paradoxically, makes it increasingly difficult for us to recognise those frames.

Challenging Perspectives

If our frames of reference become less clear, how do we conceptualise the spaces presented to us and how do we perceive each individual space in relation to one another? In this final section, I would like to return to Oplontis and unpack the seemingly straightforward lines of sight previously discussed by analysing the impact of the intermediary garden paintings in rooms 68 and 70 on these axial perspectives. The *cubiculum/areola* room series described by Pliny at 5.6.20-22 has already drawn our attention to the interplay between real and represented gardens – by merging the branches of the outside plane tree with the fictive branches of the interior fresco, Pliny challenges any strict delineation between the two spaces by creating a single, seamless intermedial motif. The phrasing Pliny uses here (*imitata pictura*), in turn, reminds us of the visual programming set out earlier in the letter, where he

[106] Spencer (2010): 132.

actively encourages us to view the natural landscape like a picture (*formam…pictam*, 5.6.13). However, if Pliny wants us to view real gardens like pictures, how should we view actual pictures (or frescoes) of said gardens? And what impact do such garden paintings have on our perception of the space they decorate and the spaces around them? It is with these questions in mind that I turn my attention back to Oplontis.

In both room 68 and 70 of the east-wing room series, garden paintings cover every surface of the walls [see Fig. 4.8]. The north wall of room 70, specifically the panel to the left of its north window (the predominant view when looking through from room 69) is representative of the series of repeated motifs we find across all of the painted surfaces of these two rooms [see Figs. 4.20 and 4.21]. The garden scene depicted on this panel is centred on a marble crater with spiral handles, sitting atop a tall base. The crater itself features a carving of a male hybrid with swirling snake legs, and is filled with bubbling water, and myrtle shrubs completely surround the ornamentation. Two birds also punctuate and bring life to the scene – on the right side, a high bright blue peacock perches on the edge of the basin, and, to the left, a smaller bird hovers, as if waiting its turn to take a drink from the water. The entire scene is set against a bright yellow background and framed with contrasting red borders. Painted vines climb up the vertical sides of the panel, and the lower border is also decorated with a pattern of low-lying shrubs.

All of the panels in room 68 and 70 follow this general pattern – a marble fountain surrounded by plants and birds, set against a yellow background and framed by red borders [see Fig. 4.22]. This pattern is also repeated in rooms 61 and 87, the 'end points' of the vistas, with the exception of the south wall of room 87, where the colour scheme is reversed and we find yellow borders surrounding a scene set against a red background [see Fig. 4.17]. Within this repeated pattern, the artist creates *varietas* across the rectangular panels through small variations in form. The fountains, for example, vary in shape, size, and design, and some emit jets of water whilst others feature a still pool. The plant types on display are also equally varied: across the range of panels we can identify myrtle, oleander, berry bushes, and pine surrounding the basins; and fern, hart's tongue, and iris feature along the bottom red border, as well as vines on the vertical borders. There are also further, but unidentifiable, species depicted on the yellow backgrounds. As Young notes, upon closer inspection of the compositions, more plants emerge – 'hazy and barely visible, quick brush strokes in darker shades of yellow paint outline additional leaves and branches, creating greater depth.'[107]

Several compositional features of these decorative schemes are worth noting. First, there is a clear emphasis on structure and order throughout: the repeated, rectangular panels

[107] Young (2015): 314.

surrounded by borders create a visual spectacle that reflects both Pliny's desire for partitioning views of 'natural' spaces into purposefully framed tableaux, and the broader definition of garden space as that which is marked off or set aside by means of a clear boundary. The choice of a bold red colour for these borders is particularly noteworthy, since this creates a much more vibrant and stand out effect than, say, a plain white or cream surround. Similarly, the choice of yellow as a background colour for these garden fountain scenes is another bold choice, and one that makes us question how we are meant to perceive the 'interior' space of these rectangular panels.

If the artist had used a more naturalistic blue background, like the one on the east and west walls of garden room 20 [see Fig 4.7], one could argue that the framed scenes on the north and south vistas of this east-wing series were designed to mirror the 'real' garden prospects to the east and west; but the choice of yellow, however, is anything but 'natural'. Are we, then, meant to view these red/yellow panels as 'windows', offering us a glimpse 'outside'? Or are they 'marked as "inside" and integrated into the interior built space'?[108] In the context of the styles of Roman mural frescoes, we can certainly view these garden panels as an example of the Second Style tendency to transform the wall into a 'series of make-believe vistas' in which the 'elaborate architectural frames depicted *on* the wall lend the tantalising impression that the wall itself dissolves, allowing isolated glimpses into a world 'outside''.[109]

The notion that these panels are windows, however, is brought into question by the inclusion of vines and plants on the red border, another example of the intermedial 'climbing vine' motif we have seen in Pliny's villa descriptions and across the Oplontis complex. Although the contrast between the red and yellow colours initially reinforces a sense of clear division between the external 'frame' and the view 'inside' the 'window', this division is undermined by the inclusion of plant elements in both areas. Are the vines meant to represent painted decoration in contrast to the 'real' fountain scenes? Are they simply additional decorative plant life? By including plants as part of the red borders, it seems to me that the artist sought to blur the distinction between frame and interior; and this, of course, provides a

[108] Young (2015): 134.
[109] Platt and Squire (2017): 23. Cf. n.84, chpt. 4, on Mau's classification of Roman painting styles. The Second-Style predilection for illusionistic framed views can be viewed as a precursor to Alberti's concept of the picture frame as a 'window' onto a three-dimensional space that extends indefinitely beyond limits, as detailed in his 1435 treatise *De Pittura*: 'I inscribe a quadrangle of right angles, as large as I wish, which is to be considered an open window through which I see what I want to paint' – see Alberti (1966), 56.

real life counterpart to the blurring of boundaries between architecture and horticulture, between *ars* and *natura*, that played such a huge part in Pliny's two villa letters.[110]

It is one thing to perceive each panel individually, or even as a painted series, as part of a single flat wall surface, but what happens when we reintegrate these two-dimensional surfaces into their three-dimensional structural surrounds? We cannot, and should not, view these painted panels alone because of the interconnected of the east-wing rooms, which is so significant that you can actually see from niche 61 all the way through to room 89, traversing six other spaces in the process (65, 68, 69, 70, 75, 87) [see Fig. 4.8]. It is through this reintegration of the panels back into the room series that notions of framing become far more complicated because, when we consider rooms 68 and 70 as part of the north-south visual axes from room 69, we see that the garden paintings within these rooms are not only bounded themselves, but also act as boundaries for other rooms. The paintings within 68 and 70 of course feature the individually framed fountain scenes already discussed, and they are also framed by the window openings from room 69, creating a sort of double enclosure as we look into the rooms from the central point of 69. These paintings, however, also frame the windows looking through into rooms 87 and 61, which again feature the same yellow/red repeated garden composition. The positioning of garden paintings at the intermediary and end points of these visual axes creates a contradiction where the 'garden' element is both frame and the thing being framed, and at the same time, dependant on perspective [see Fig. 4.23];[111] and this 'hall of mirrors' effects thus creates a form of *mise en abyme* 'where the ontological status of two-dimensional painting and three-dimensional garden (not to mention interior and exterior space) continually shifts as each frames the other'.[112]

The same effect is created by the paintings on the exterior walls of room 78 (facing onto the swimming pool garden, specifically area 92) and room 66 (facing onto portico 60 and area 80), paintings often overlooked in comparison to the lavish examples in the east-wing series but equally important in terms of demonstrating the contradictory messages of framing, as well as the challenging sense of perspective, that I have been discussing thus far [see Fig. 4.3].[113] Here, at the base of the east wall of room 78, and underneath a window that provides a view into the interior space, we find a painted garden motif that extends along the entire

[110] The use of the vine motif within the borders here may also remind us of the reconfiguration of categories of 'figure' and 'ornament', as discussed in chapter four (see pp.109-110); as well as Vitruvius' condemnation of vegetal motifs as structural *monstra* (see p. 131).
[111] Cf. Platt (2017), 112-113, on similar framing games in *cubiculum* M at the Villa of P. Fannius Synistor at Boscoreale.
[112] Platt and Squire (2017): 66. On the window or niche as a 'hiatus' or 'embrasure' in the wall, see Stoichita (1997), esp. 49, where he discusses the Dutch painting genre of *doorkijkje*, in which concentric doorways are used as perceptual framing devices.
[113] These murals also find a mirror image at the northern end of the swimming pool, on the exterior walls of rooms 94 and 97, but these spaces are only partially excavated.

exterior wall, crossing over onto the eastern section of the exterior of room 66, and also wrapping round onto the north exterior wall of that room [see Figs. 4.24 and 4.25]. In the foreground of the painting, there is a brown lattice fence, behind which is a series of low-lying green shrubbery surrounded by flying birds, and all set against a white/cream background; and, as such, these naturalistic scenes reflect the stereotypical features we have come to recognise in Roman garden paintings. Due to their exterior location, these paintings are not as well-preserved as those in the interior, and they generally lack the level of detail that would give them a proper three-dimensional appearance but the life-like size of the plants, the location of the mural close to the ground, and the accompanying birds in the scene all prevent these borders from slipping into the category of fully abstract pattern.

These particular exterior garden paintings highlight the constant play between inside and outside, framing and framed, enclosing and enclosed space that we have encountered elsewhere at Oplontis and in Pliny's descriptions. From inside room 78, we are presented with a relatively straightforward, framed view out on to the exterior garden;[114] but, from a position inside the exterior garden, framing once again becomes far more complex, and specifically because of the placement and compositional characteristics of the garden paintings. First, the architectural structure of the walls in question here surround the interior room, but these walls also contribute to bounding the outside garden, creating a double enclosure; and the garden scene on display on the exterior face of the wall (itself confined within the two-dimensional plane) both encloses the exterior space and acts as a surrounding frame into the interior one. This, in turn, reminds us of the paradox of the Ara Pacis structure, where we saw plants as enclosed within the confines of the floral frieze panels, but also as the enclosing element of the altar space proper, surrounding the interior as a container.[115]

Second, the inclusion of a fence within the composition of the wall paintings at Oplontis also reminds us of the multiple perimeters at work in Livia's Garden Room, and, particularly, their ability to challenge or confuse a viewer's perspective.[116] Is the painted fence on the dado of the exterior wall of room 78 meant to reiterate keeping us hemmed 'inside' the real, outside garden? Or is the fence a reminder that the viewer is being kept at a conceptual distance 'outside' of the represented garden beyond the fence? We, as viewers, are simultaneously inside the outside garden, but also outside the painted garden. Which is the 'correct' viewpoint to take with these differing perspectives on offer, if there is one at all? Or are we meant to view them in conjunction with one another? What these particular paintings

[114] For a reconstruction of the interior of room 78, see Barker (2017).
[115] On the floral friezes' paradoxical dual status as container and contained structure, see p. 130, chpt. 4.
[116] On these multiple perimeters, see p.129, chpt. 4.

demonstrate is how the combination of garden paintings and garden spaces at Oplontis appear purposefully designed to multiply our perspectives and challenge our sense of spatial delineation. We are left constantly questioning where we are in relation to each garden space, and, despite the emphasis on apparently clear and structured vistas, we are constantly required to realign our focus again and again.

At the beginning of this chapter, I set out to examine the extent to which elite Romans of the first-century AD regarded their villa gardens along the Bay of Naples as objects of artificially constructed viewpoints, and to explore the impact of this framing (both metaphorical and physical) on our perception of the space. More specifically, through a comparison of Pliny the Younger's ekphrastic villa descriptions and the material remains of Villa A at Oplontis, I sought to establish a cultural perspective on the thematics of viewing garden space that could then be used a platform to analyse views of real and fictive gardens within an actual villa site. In turn, I set out to demonstrate how a multimedia examination of these types of gardens enables us not only to envisage the physical appearance of said gardens; but, perhaps more importantly, how this appearance was perceived phenomenologically by the occupants of the villa site.

Throughout the course of my analysis, it became clear that both Pliny and the designers of Villa A were guided by a central desire to partition the natural world into a series of framed vistas – and the remains of green spaces at Oplontis clearly demonstrate how a play between visual openness and spatial segregation, created through the use of various boundaries, can be utilised to direct and guide the visitor's lines of sight, ultimately controlling their movement to and through different areas of the villa. Paradoxically, though, despite an insistence on the apparent proliferation of framing devices in the construction of villa gardens, the boundaries set up in Villa A do not operate as finite divisions but, rather, as porous membranes that mediate between a series of oppositions (or, as Pliny states, '*distinguit et miscet*'). In particular, it is the creation of a 'green architecture' that dissolves the distinction between architectural and horticultural elements, which, in turn, blurs the lines between interior and exterior space, and our perception of what truly constitutes either *ars* or *natura*.

This blurring of boundaries, then, along with the orientation of garden space and paintings, creates a series of spaces at Oplontis that consistently multiply the perspectives on offer and challenge our sense of orientation: we saw a disparity between physical and visual boundaries; enclosing boundaries to one space acting as windows on to another; and paintings that are enclosed within a two-dimensional plane both 'enclosing' a physical space, whilst

also connecting us to an imaginary landscape that has no bounds. Thus, across the complex, the garden boundary seems to draw attention to itself, whilst also deconstructing itself, to the point where the ‘garden’ element can simultaneously be framed space and the frame itself. Indeed, the idea of a boundary has been completely flipped on its head in the villa context, since the paradoxical perspectives offered to us create a viewer experience that does not provide a clear delineation between what is ‘inside’ or ‘outside’ any particular garden space. Where does one garden begin? Where does it end? Once again, then, it remains unclear.

Conclusion

At the outset of this thesis, I stated my aim of interrogating the notion of 'the boundary' as an essential characteristic of the Roman garden in order to explore the perception of garden space in response to its limits. Using case studies from both literature and material and visual culture, my study was designed to examine the status of individual garden sites by providing answers to the following key questions: what purpose do boundaries serve in each individual garden? Why are they constructed in the way they are? How do they affect the relationship between the garden and the not-garden, the garden and the visitor, or the garden and the viewer? And how does the notion of a boundary translate across the various real, represented, and textual garden forms? In posing these questions, I sought to demonstrate the potential for furthering our understanding of individual Roman gardens by combining critical and nuanced analysis of each site's boundaries with an overall theoretical framework that allowed for intermedial analysis at the level of space.

In the preceding chapters, I have explored the status of three sub-categories of Roman garden space from the Late Republic and Early Empire (c.100BC – AD150) — agricultural, sacred, and elite villa — as they relate to, or are framed by, their contexts. Although, due to a lack of evidence available, it was not always possible to achieve an intermedial analysis within each individual sub-category (most obviously, in chapter three), I was able to integrate evidence from both literature and visual and material culture across the three case study chapters as a whole. Of course, as with any intermedial investigation, there was potential difficultly in moving across analysis of different media, produced in different contexts, and for different audiences; and yet the formulation of my six chosen case studies into three sets of comparative pairs demonstrated a productive method for focusing on the key issues at stake, whilst also providing a flexible enough model for use in complementary further research. By focusing on a common characteristic (the boundary) across a variety of examples arranged by theme, I was able to ground my wide-ranging analysis through the use of a clear anchoring principle. Furthermore, the three sub-categories chosen represented just three of the several categories of Roman garden space identified in chapter one, and the choice of case studies within these sub-categories could have also been different; thus demonstrating the potential of this structural framework for future investigations into garden space and its boundaries.

In the course of my investigation, I have demonstrated that, although Roman gardens of the Late Republic and Early Empire all demonstrate a basic adherence to the transcultural understanding of the garden as a marked-off and 'separate' cultivated space, they also all operate within broader spatial networks; and it is the relationship with these networks that

creates such intriguing ambiguity within each individual garden site. Indeed, it became clear that the ambiguities of garden space at-large stemmed from the permeability of its edges, albeit permeability expressed in different ways depending on the individual garden site.

In chapter three, for example, my analysis highlighted how Virgil and Columella, through the construction of their gardens-as-texts, articulated a set of cultural perceptions regarding the status of the 'original' *hortus*; and how these perceptions did not allow us to draw a definitive line between garden space proper and agricultural space at-large. The *hortus* was shown to be neither truly 'inside' nor 'outside' of agriculture, but, instead, a supplement to it. This supplementary classification, in turn, became a useful critical concept for unpacking and understanding the often paradoxical and ambiguous spatial and temporal structures at work within other, and later, manifestations of garden space.

Indeed, the ways in which garden space of this period challenged straightforward delineations of normative categories of time and space was made abundantly clear in my examination of the garden-themed compositions of the *Ara Pacis* and Livia's Garden Room in chapter four. Here, through an analysis of the ways in which boundaries were constructed, represented, and contested within the two compositions, I demonstrated how Augustan image-makers harnessed the ambiguity of gaden space in order to reflect the ideological structures at work within the new regime. This ambiguity, in turn, created an intersection between sacred space and garden space; an intersection that allows us to reframe the *Ara Pacis* as a monumental sacred grove to Augustus that compensated for the transient nature of green space elsewhere in the city by translating the imperial botanical mythology into stone.

In this way, the case studies of chapters three and four showcased the heterotopic nature of garden space in their relational disruption of time and space; and the heterotopic dislocation of space, in particular, was also a key feature of the elite villa gardens discussed in chapter five. In both the material remains of Villa A at Oplontis and the ekphrastic villa letters of Pliny the Younger, it was clear that garden boundaries had been constructed in such a way as to consistently challenge our sense of perspective and realign our focus again and again. We were then left unable to make a clear distinction between a number of categoric opposites, nor were we able to determine the limits of any given individual garden space.

My analysis of the six case studies thus demonstrated how the Romans of the Late Republic and Early Empire constructed garden boundaries specifically in order to open up or undermine the division between a number of dichotomies, such as inside/outside, practical/aesthetic, saced/profane, art/nature, and real/imagined. Although the extent of of this deconstruction, and the ways in which it was accomplished, varied between the individual garden sites and across the different media, it was clear that, across the board, the garden

boundary did not just simply police access and control, but, rather, acted as a porous membrane that mediated between a series of oppositions. The resultant liminal and interstitial nature of the garden led me to conceptualise its boundaries as more akin to frames, in that they not only delineated the space, but also loaded that space with its meanings. In fact, when the garden space was at its most destabilised state, the garden boundary, functioning as a frame, was shown to draw attention to itself, whilst also deconstructing itself — to the point where the garden was simultaneously a framed space and the very frame itself.

In this way, despite the natural assumption that a boundary inherently involves some sort of tangible barrier, my analysis demonstrated that the notion of a *garden* boundary moves far beyond an act of discrete spatial division. It is for this reason that I chose not to actively engage with Hillier and Hanson's space syntax model as part of my case study analysis, even though this had been utilised by scholars previously to analyse the social organisation of Roman garden space.[1] As detailed in chapter two, proponents of this theory view garden boundaries as akin to architectural boundaries in that they enclose a 'definite region of space', and segregate it 'from what would otherwise be undifferentiated space';[2] and, following this, they have used the process of 'access analysis' to quantitatively define levels of access and control across garden boundaries within the Roman household. Although insights can be gained from this approach specifically in relation to the domestic sphere, it was too restrictive as a model to consider both the physical *and* the conceptual boundaries at work in individual garden sites, and it was also not flexible enough to account for both real *and* representational garden spaces. Garden boundaries are fundamentally not the same as architectural boundaries, despite some overlap, and so it was clear that I should seek to establish a series of analytical tools that work for gardens on their own terms.

Through the selection and evaluation of my chosen case studies, I have thus suggested new ways of understanding Roman gardens at-large by refining the use of previous theoretical methodologies and proposing new ones; which, in turn, has provided fresh insight into individual garden sites, and also created a framework for future research. Following the so-called spatial turn, scholars have used increasingly sophisticated methods to analyse ancient gardens and landscapes, both at an individual and intermedial level. In particular, as discussed in chapter two, Soja's Thirdspace has become the dominant model for approaching garden space and the interplay of its multiple associations; and scholars have demonstrated the usefulness of this approach in allowing us to step back from individual sites, texts, or

[1] For example, Von Stackelberg (2009), and Anguissola (2012).
[2] Grahame (1999): 54-5.

representations and 'relocate' garden space 'within the wider framework of conceptual space'.[3]

This Thirdspace model is indeed useful for considering the interaction between different types of gardens (in this instance, agricultural vs. sacred vs. elite villa) and also different types of media (literary vs. artistic vs. archaeological) because it allows us to locate the 'essence' of the garden space *between* these categories, without naively forcing them together. It is this very model that allowed me to consider the Roman delight in playing with garden boundaries across all of the chosen examples in this thesis, whilst still appreciating that these games may be presented to us in wide-ranging formats. There are, however, limitations to the way in which Thirdspace can be utilised in the analysis of Roman gardens, and my investigation has demonstrated that other complementary theoretical frameworks provide more clarity on both the status of the garden within the Roman imagination, and also the ways in which temporal and spatial boundaries intersect with one another in individual Roman garden sites.

In the first instance, Derrida's formulation of the concept of supplementation appears to be most valuable in articulating the relationship between individual garden sites and their surroundings or, more broadly, between garden sub-categories and their wider 'networks'. In all three case study chapters, the individual garden spaces were simultaneously inside and outside a broader network, both related to that network and yet also on the edge, part of and yet also 'extra' somehow. These markers of supplementation were most explicit in chapters three and five, made manifest by the paratextual construction of garden texts and the creation of 'green architecture', respectively; but the deconstructive focus of Derrida's approach also played a key role in the reconfiguring of frame and ornament in chapter four in order to demonstrate that the parergonal status of garden imagery need not render it simply marginal. In this way, I have demonstrated that the logic of supplementarity can be utilised as an effective interpretative strategy for understanding the continuous and contiguous relationships between gardens and their surroundings.

Following such a deconstructive approach naturally destabilises traditional hierarchies and dichotomies, and yet it was clear throughout my analysis that the destabilisation within garden space should not be viewed as an accidental and unfortunate outcome. Indeed, the creators of each individual garden seemed to actively embrace the ambiguity that resulted from the deconstruction of normative categories, and harness it in order to load the spaces with multiple and complex meanings. It is at this point that we need to implement a further methodology; for, although Derrida gives us the deconstructive tool to

[3] Von Stackelberg (2009): 49.

understand the relational aspects of garden space, we still require a means of conceptualising the destabilisation that occurs *within* that space.

It is in this instance that Foucault's concept of 'the heterotopia' is most useful. Foucault's categorisation of the garden as a heterotopia had previously found its way into the analysis of Roman gardens.[4] Such analyses tended to focus solely on the garden as a site of resistance, picking up on the association between heterotopic discourse and notions of transgression — this is perhaps unsurprising, since garden spaces are defined by boundaries, and boundaries invite transgression. My analysis, however, demonstrated how heterotopic discourse can also be put to use in understanding the 'relational disruption of space and time' within garden space.[5] Each of the garden sites explored engaged with a combination of different, and often conflicting, spatial and temporal boundaries, and understanding how these 'worked' in conjunction with one another was crucial for uncovering the layers of meaning within the space. The concept of the heterotopia, in which boundaries and binary thinking are held in 'productive suspension' within an overarching ambivalence, thus provides a useful model for conceptualising how games of destabilisation have been put to use in any given garden site.[6]

Returning, then, to the initial characterisation of garden space made in chapter one, we can now reflect on the garden's status as a bounded space, operating within the broader remit of landscape; and reconsider how useful such definitions are in helping us distinguish what is garden space and what is 'not-garden' space. My analysis has highlighted that what was significant for the Romans of the Late Republic and Early Empire was not so much the garden boundary itself, but, rather, the delight in playing with concepts of boundedness and separation. This is not to say that defining the garden as a bounded space is incorrect or simply not useful. Indeed, it is necessary to continue to conceptualise the space in this way; for the traditional spatial divisions and conceptual boundaries still exist — they are still set up — but they are also constantly undermined, re-worked, or played with in new and provocative ways. The creators of each of the gardens analysed, whether real or representational, all established spaces wherein perspectives usually considered incompatible or oppositional could be encompassed to create 'both/and also' analyses, rather than simple 'either/or' conclusions. We should, therefore, continue to focus on the 'grey' areas between the apparent 'black-and-white' divisions within garden space, since my analysis has made clear that evaluating and understanding the role of ambiguity is crucial in determining the role, status, and perception of each individual garden site.

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[4] Most notably in the scholarship of Von Stackelberg (2009) and Pagán (2006).
[5] Johnson (2006): 80.
[6] Johnson (2006): 78.

Moving forward, though, there is still a need for further clarity regarding the most essential division of them all — garden vs. not-garden. Although this thesis provides a series of theoretical tools for examining the role and function of boundaries within individual garden sites across different media, and for considering how these gardens relate to the networks they are situated within, it is still unclear in some contexts the point at which we can designate a bounded and cultivated space as a garden proper. The garden may be a 'microcosm of the ideal landscape', but at what point does a space change from being a mere landscape to an actual garden? The challenges in answering such a question were most evident in chapter four of this thesis. Here, it was clear that the intersection between sacred space and garden space created a sense of ambiguity in the division between spaces that had previously been deemed 'sacral-idyllic' and those that have been termed 'a garden'. I have proposed the concept of supplementation for understanding the garden's relationship with its surrounding networks, but is garden space a supplement of the sacral-idyllic, or vice-versa? Since no comprehensive intermedial study of Roman sacred groves currently exists, this question is perhaps the most provocative to arise out of the conclusions drawn in my analysis.

As a means of drawing this thesis to a close, I would like to conclude my study by briefly drawing attention to part of an ekphrasis in Seneca's *Thyestes*, which describes a grove (*nemus*) at the centre of the royal palace of Atreus:[7]

> *alta vetustum valle compescens nemus,*
> *penetrale regni, nulla qua laetos solet*
> *praebere ramos arbor aut ferro coli,*
> *sed taxus et cupressus et nigra ilice*
> *obscura nutat silva, quam supra eminens*
> *despectat alte quercus et vincit nemus.*
> *hinc auspicari regna Tantalidae solent,*
> *hinc petere lassis rebus ac dubiis opem.*

> In the deepest recess lies a secret place, a high wall enclosing a sacred grove: the innermost part of the realm, where no trees stretch out burgeoning branches nor are tended to by the knife; but there are yews and cypresses and a dark thicket of black ilex, above which a towering oak looks down and

[7] Sen. *Thyestes* 651-8, transl. my own. On this passage, see, for example, Faber (2007); Tarrant (1985); and Unruh (2014).

> dominates the grove. Here the Tantalids inaugurate their rule by custom; here they seek aid in doubtful and obscure matters.

In its structurally-significant location at both the centre of the physical complex being described (*penetrale regni*, 652), and the ekphrastic description itself, Atreus' *nemus* is clearly meant to evoke the typical inner courtyard garden of a large Roman house. However, in contrast to the abundant, but carefully maintained, garden spaces I have discussed, we see no sign of expert cultivation here at all: the trees are so lifeless that they do not need to be pruned (*nulla qua…coli*, 652-3); and, instead of a harmonious relationship between man and nature, the oak dominates (*vincit*, 656) the seat of power.[8] Furthermore, the grove completely undermines our positive perception of nature's cyclical pattern of renewal and growth. As the starting point of the reigns of the kings of Argos (*hinc auspicari regna Tantalidae solent*, 657), the *nemus* represents a source of evil for the House of Pelops and acts as the 'perfect symbol' for the 'hereditary evil of the dynasty'.[9]

Such a dark and ominous grove, then, not only acts as a microcosm of the 'gothic and disjointed' world of the *Thyestes*, but it also demonstrates the powerful effects of a world in which the 'boundaries of the civilized and the barbarous' have completely broken down;[10] and, unlike the spaces examined in this thesis, where binaries were held in productive suspension, this 'anti-garden' provides us with a stark warning of what happens when the discourse of garden space is taken to its most negative extreme.

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[8] Fisher (2007) 434, likens the domination of the oak over the grove to that of the tyrant over their kingdom.

[9] See Unruh (2014), 254: 'The Tantalids' actions violate natural laws of kinship; yet, since they are the result of a hereditary curse, they spring from a part of each doer's nature'. The grove's symbolism regarding the dynasty is also strengthened by the description of the trophies hanging from the trees (659-64), all of which act as memorials for Atreus' ancestors.

[10] Myers (2018): 277.

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Image Appendix